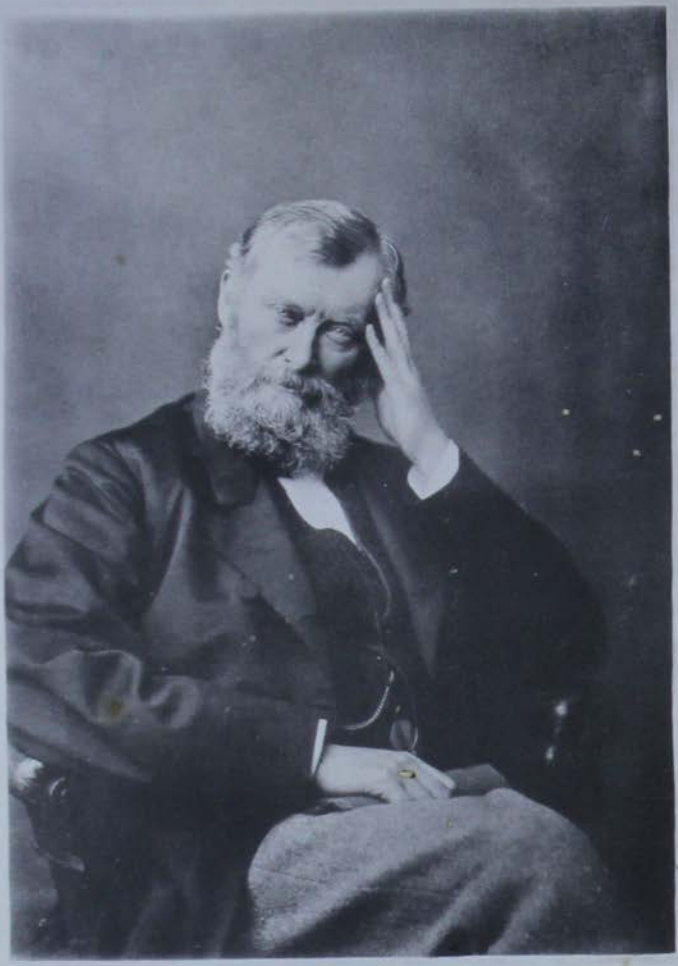
00024281

BOMBAY BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY
TOWN HALL, BOMBAY.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 05 October, 2018



WILLIAM EDWARD FORSTER.
1874.

[FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY MESSRS. ELLIOT & FRY]

LIFE

OF

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

WILLIAM EDWARD FORSTER

BY

T. WEMYSS REID.

24281
a c

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

FOURTH EDITION.

LONDON: CHAPMAN AND HALL, LIMITED.

1888.

[ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.]

24231

00024281

CONTENTS OF VOL. II.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

THE GENEVA ARBITRATION 1

CHAPTER II.

VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES 39

CHAPTER III.

THE LEADERSHIP OF THE LIBERAL PARTY—THE EASTERN QUESTION 93

CHAPTER IV.

FOREIGN POLICY OF THE TORY GOVERNMENT 143

CHAPTER V.

THE CAUCUS 205

CHAPTER VI.

THE IRISH SECRETARYSHIP 233

CHAPTER VII.

THE PROTECTION ACT 275

CHAPTER VIII.

PAGE
THE BATTLE WITH THE LAND LEAGUE 334

CHAPTER IX.

CLOSING DAYS IN IRELAND 381

CHAPTER X.

THE KILMAINHAM TREATY—RESIGNATION 423

CHAPTER XI.

LAST YEARS 471

CHAPTER XII.

ILLNESS AND DEATH 521

CHAPTER XIII.

CONCLUSION 563

ILLUSTRATIONS.

PORTRAIT, 1874 ... ... *Frontispiece*
LIBRARY AT WHARFESIDE ... ... *To face* 471

LIFE OF THE
RIGHT HON. W. E. FORSTER.

CHAPTER I.

THE GENEVA ARBITRATION.

In order to compress as far as possible into one section of this work the story of Forster's labours in connection with the Education Act, I have to some extent anticipated the chronological course of events. It is now necessary to deal with some other matters of importance that arose whilst he was a member of the Government of 1868–74. And first a word must be said as to the other labours which he had to face in his office besides those relating to education.

The Vice-President of the Council has as many duties to discharge as a maid-of-all-work. Questions so remote from ordinary educational topics as vivisection, the contagious diseases of animals, and a hundred other subjects of the most miscellaneous character, have to be dealt with in that which is primarily the Education Office. It

was very soon after he entered upon his new post that Forster began to understand how heavy was the task laid upon him.

To his Wife.

"Strawberry Hill,
"Sunday evening, January 10th, 1869.

"It is not just twelve, my dearest, but I must write to see a line before I go to bed. This place is amusing. . . . The night before last, Lord Russell was here, very old and very deaf, with a velvet cap on his head and a hat in his hand; but in cheery spirits, the plucky old fellow that he is. Last night, we had the Duc de Chartres and the Duc d'Aumale; the latter has stayed over to-day, and is very conversable, but he looks aged. I have just been having a long talk with him on the Guises and the Valois Kings. Osborne also is here. He is at his best; full of broad but good-humoured fun, and at dinner yesterday it was a play to see the contest between him and Hayward.

"My day has answered, as I have got the talk with Bruce I wanted; but really to master this office will need an amount of work which is fearful. Brand writes me word I must bring in a Cattle Plague Bill. Of course I can let matters go, filling up gaps as they yawn; but to fill my place, that is, to do my duty, I must find out in a day or two, with my time fully occupied by other matters, what ought to be done, better than those

persons who have attended to the matter or been practically interested for years. . . . Well, my dearest, I long for thee to be with me, and the dear children also. You will help me through the next few years—they can only be few. If all this had come earlier, when there would have been more of them, I might have done more good. But now to bed."

The most important piece of legislation which he carried out, in addition to the Education Act, was the Ballot Act. This Act may be said to have been born in the Education Office, for the original idea of the ballot, as it is now in use in our parliamentary and municipal elections, is to be found in the bye-laws framed in 1870 for the election of the London School Board. When the first election under the Education Act took place in London, Mr. Forster, accompanied by Lord Hartington and Mr. Cumin, went to the Westminster polling station, and watched the voting with eager interest. He was not merely seeking to satisfy himself as to the way in which the Education Act was likely to be supported in London. He was learning a lesson in connection with the ballot, for it had already been decided that a Ballot Bill should shortly be introduced into Parliament. The novelty of secret voting was at that time so great that even men of exceptional intelligence could hardly comprehend the new

method of recording their opinions. At this School Board election of 1870, for example, one of Forster's most distinguished colleagues in the Cabinet, having duly filled up his voting paper, turned to the officer in charge of the ballot, and asked him, with pathetic interest, on what part of the paper he was to sign his name.

It was with ignorance of this kind—ignorance begotten of the Englishman's natural predilection for the time-honoured system of open voting—that Forster had to deal when he brought in his Ballot Bill. The fight was a prolonged one. As has already been seen, the bill was thrown out by the Lords when it was first brought forward in 1871. On that occasion Mr. Forster got into some little trouble with the Upper House, arising from some cavalier remark which he made during the debate in Committee as to the way in which the Peers would probably deal with the measure. This remark was eagerly fastened upon by Mr. Disraeli, and it seemed not unlikely that some charge would be brought against him in the House of Lords. The affair blew over, however; and the peers satisfied themselves with rejecting the bill. Its passage through the House of Commons, owing to the novelty of the machinery provided for the purpose of preserving secrecy, had been prolonged and difficult, twenty-seven nights being occupied in the debates, actually more than the time taken to pass the Education Act. A couple of evenings

sufficed to seal its fate in the House of Lords. Reintroduced at the very beginning of the session of 1872, it again encountered considerable opposition, and there seems at one time to have been considerable risk of its loss, owing to the perfunctory manner in which some of Forster's colleagues, who had no real love for the measure, discharged their duty in regard to it. However, after twenty-three nights of debate, it was at last sent to the House of Lords, and on July 18th it received the royal assent. So completely does the Education Bill eclipse all the other Parliamentary achievements of Mr. Forster, that it hardly seems worth while to mention the Ballot Act in connection with his legislative work. Those who watched him whilst he was passing this latter measure through the House of Commons, however, came to the conclusion that the management of the business spoke even more highly for Forster's capacity as a Parliamentary tactician than did his success with the Education Act.

Of the numerous measures connected with the outbreak of cattle plague with which he had to deal whilst at the Council Office it is unnecessary to speak, except to point out the extent to which this department of the office encroached upon his time and absorbed his strength. Whatever he had to do in connection with it was done with the same thoroughness and energy as he had displayed in his educational work. The public health is, to a

certain extent, under the Vice-President of the Council, and a Vaccination Laws Amendment Bill was among the measures which he brought forward and piloted through Parliament. It had been introduced at the time of one of the periodical outbreaks of small-pox in the metropolis, and when there was a loud outcry in favour of re-vaccination. Forster resolved that he would undergo re-vaccination, and he took advantage of the occasion to make a practical experiment as to the character of the vaccination by public officers. Without telling any one of his intention, he presented himself at the rooms of one of these officials during the hours prescribed for the attendance of the public, patiently waited his turn, and was duly operated upon by a medical man who was wholly ignorant of his identity. From that time he was able to speak more authoritatively than most members of Parliament could pretend to do upon the question of public vaccination and the manner in which the poor were served by the officers appointed by the law.

There was another question associated with his official duties which interested him greatly. This was the part of his functions which related to the treatment of animals. In connection with the measures he had to introduce for preventing the spread of contagious diseases among cattle, he was able, to his intense delight, to do something to mitigate the sufferings which sheep and oxen have

to undergo in their passage from the fields to the markets; whilst, in connection with the practice of vivisection, on which he felt very strongly, he had the opportunity of taking some steps to protect dumb creatures from anything like reckless action on the part of men of science.

Extract from his Diary.

"*March* 21*st*, 1872.—I finally settled with Simon the rabbit case. I was intending a minute to Lord Ripon, saying that I disapprove of any experiments on living animals; but, finding that not only was there no vivisection *à la* Majendie, but that the experiments were at the Brown Institution, I withdrew my minute, getting an assurance from Simon that there should be no such vivisection without warning me, and that when pain was given by inoculation chloroform should be given. He said the experiments were of the utmost importance, assisting towards remedies for consumption. I do not like it, but have done the best I can."

Writing to Sir Arthur Helps (January 12th, 1873) he expresses very strongly his horror of anything like reckless cruelty to animals in the name of science, and adds, "My mind is made up on these three points: (1) Vivisection may in some most rare cases be useful for the prolongation of life and removal of suffering of man and beast;

(2) it is therefore allowable when very rarely practised by real discoverers. (3) But it is not allowable even for them except with every possible alleviation of pain, and ought to be absolutely forbidden by learners and general practitioners." The well-known line which teaches us that "the mark of rank in nature is capacity for pain" was rejected by Forster. He believed that the sufferings of a rabbit under vivisection were not less than his own would be under the same process, and he could not bear the thought that such pain should be inflicted save where something like an absolute necessity was proved.

The years 1869 to 1872 were made very anxious years to English statesmen, owing to the condition of the relations of this country with the United States. The strong feeling of resentment which had been engendered on the other side of the Atlantic, not, perhaps, so much by the depredations of the *Alabama* as by the tone of undisguised hostility to the North which had been adopted during the war by nearly every politician of eminence in this country save Mr. Bright, Mr. Cobden, and Mr. Forster, was bearing its natural fruit. We now had on our hands one of those "unfinished questions" which "have no pity for the repose of nations." The successful North did not forget the time when it had looked in vain, in the crisis of its fate, to the English Cabinet for

some expression of sympathy and goodwill. Its people did not press for the immediate settlement of the claims they had put forth on account of the depredations of the *Alabama* and the other privateers built by Englishmen. But they made known those claims to the whole world, and they further made it known that, until they had been settled, no real goodwill could exist betwen the two branches of the English race. When or how they would press for a settlement they refused to say. It was enough for them that the open question remained an open and ever-growing sore.

It was impossible for English statesmen to remain easy in mind whilst this was the state of feeling in America. Every Englishman would have deprecated a war between the two countries as an outrage upon civilization. But, even though no thought of war might exist in connection with the question, it was clear that for the sake of both peoples some effort ought to be made to put an end to the sense of grievance on the part of the Americans. It was manifestly incumbent upon England to take the first step in such a matter, for it was the action of England which had injured America. It was a fortunate thing for both countries that the Gladstone Ministry of 1868 contained two such tried friends of the United States as Mr. Bright and Mr. Forster. In what esteem the latter was held by leading Americans the

following letter from Mr. Adams, the American Minister to this country, will show :—

To MR. FORSTER.

"54, Portland Place, March 14th, 1868.

"MY DEAR MR. FORSTER,

"I brought with me from the United States several copies of a work to which I devoted the greater part of eight of the best years of my life.* They have been for the most part placed in the public libraries of the kingdom. I find one copy which I had reserved for the person whom I most esteem, as well for his staunch and unvarying support of a policy of goodwill to America as for his personal qualities, as I have observed them in private intercourse. Will you do me the great favour to accept of it?

"Very truly yours,

"CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS."

In 1869 the Government were able to negotiate a treaty with Mr. Reverdy Johnson, the genial Minister of the United States, who had come over to this country full of a desire to re-establish friendly relations with us. By this treaty the questions in dispute were to be submitted to four commissioners, two English and two American, and to an arbitrator, chosen by the commissioners.

* The book was a collected edition of the works of Mr. Adams's father.

The treaty was hailed with great satisfaction in England; but when it was submitted to the American Senate for ratification it was violently attacked, more especially by Mr. Sumner. The Senate rejected the proposal, and the President recalled Mr. Reverdy Johnson, replacing him by Mr. J. L. Motley, the well-known historian.

Mr. Sumner's speech aroused strong feeling both in America and in England, and for a time it seemed that the hopes of a pacific settlement of the question in dispute were at an end. Forster was the first man of importance on this side of the Atlantic to make some reply to Mr. Sumner. Addressing his constituents at Bradford (May 20th, 1869), he deplored the fact that so distinguished an American as Mr. Sumner should, after Englishmen had swallowed their pride and agreed to submit their differences with the United States to arbitration, have deliberately sought to prevent this arbitration, and to insist upon something like an unconditional surrender and apology on our part. It happened that Forster could speak of Mr. Sumner as a personal friend. The great American had been his guest at Wharfeside in 1857, and they had corresponded at intervals since then. But the high tribute which he paid to Mr. Sumner's personal virtues did not soften the strength of the case which he made out in reply to that gentleman's bitter and unreasonable attack upon England. The speech dealt fully with the

points made by Sumner, and, above all, with his contention that the proclamation of neutrality was a hostile act on our part. This proclamation had been made, Forster showed, in accordance with the earnest wishes of himself and of other friends of the North.

His powerful argument made a great impression in England, where it was generally accepted as the authoritative reply to Mr. Sumner's somewhat splenetic outburst of wounded patriotism. In America, too, it was received, by all those who were more anxious to see concord restored than to keep alive a painful feeling of resentment, with unbounded satisfaction, and many correspondents from the other side of the Atlantic made haste to assure Mr. Forster that he had expressed their views as well as his own in his answer to Mr. Sumner. Of the letters of that period, only those of Mr. Adams and Mr. Sumner himself need be quoted here.

From Mr. Adams.

"Quincy, Massachusetts,
"June 4th, 1869.

"My dear Mr. Forster,

"It is now more than a year since I left my post in London, and I have scarcely written a single letter to any of the friends I left there. This must be ascribed, not to my forgetfulness of them, but to the absorbing nature of the private

occupation which has monopolized my attention all this time. Ten years of absence, and the changes made by the war have imposed upon me a necessity of corresponding exertion, which is yet pressing upon me, and which will, I fear, continue to do so for several years to come. So far as my private interests are concerned, I did not return a moment too soon.

"I very much fear that I cannot say the same of the public interests. Without claiming any extravagant share upon the influence of events, I think I may say that had I remained until March, the embarrassments occasioned by the mistakes of my successor would not have been interposed. Without personal knowledge of him, I had yet cherished an idea, gathered from his prudent public action during the war, that he would be, at any rate, a safe and cautious representative. I very much fear that the course public opinion has taken in this country must be attributed, in a great measure, to his errors and to his misconception of his own actual position as an exponent of our national feelings. He was led to this mistake by the accidental circumstance of his unanimous confirmation by the Senate, to which he attached a significance that did not belong to it. Had I remained, the only difference would have been that nothing at all would have been done until the new administration had come in. Thus all the events which now embarrass it would

have been saved. On this account I take some blame to myself for my retreat, though upon every other I am sure that I was justified. And even upon this, how could any one foresee what happened?

"I have been led to this train of thought by reading a report of your speech at Bradford, which is so moderate and sensible that I shall try to get it inserted in some of the papers here. Not that I think anything can undo the mischief that has been done. Far from it. The great objection to Mr. Sumner's speech, in my mind, is not anything intrinsic, but the circumstance that it embittered the vague sense of injury entertained by nine-tenths of our people, and stimulated the demand for 'reparation,' as it is called, far beyond even the extreme point at which he seemed to place it. The consequence is, that anything likely to be conceded will fall so far below the expectation that it will only increase the dissatisfaction. Apart from this, there is some danger in the tendency of the extreme men of the stronger party to resort to the subject as a means of maintaining their waning influence. I am not in the confidence of the Administration, and therefore cannot express any opinion of their policy, that has foundation in authority. But I believe there is no purpose of making difficulty. The only danger in that quarter lies in the idea of delay, for the sake of seizing the first opportunity that may occur for

what is called 'retaliation.' This is not a very elevated policy, and it may be laid aside, after longer experience in public affairs, in favour of a better; and I hope it will.

"Our friend Motley is, I think, very well disposed. I had some conversation with him just before he left, which convinced me that the desire to succeed in his mission will ensure a disposition to avoid offence and to be patient. I trust that on your side you will entertain the same, so that the two countries may avoid a collision, which could by no possibility benefit either, and would injure both.

"Mrs. Adams desires me to express her kindest regards to Mrs. Forster, in which I fully join.

"Very truly yours,

"C. F. ADAMS."

From MR. SUMNER.

[*Private.*]

"Washington, June 8th, 1869.

"DEAR MR. FORSTER,

"I had already read your speech before I received the copy which you kindly sent me. *Si sic omnia!* If other English utterances were in the same tone, the differences between the two countries would be much nearer a settlement than I fear they are.

"The last few weeks have witnessed a consentaneous effort in England to widen the breach,

(1) by suppressing the statement of our grievances, (2) by daily misrepresentations of that statement, and (3) by abuse and vilification. Of course all this postpones the day of settlement, for there can be no settlement until a plain statement of our case is read and understood in England. This is now refused. I am sorry, because I desire a settlement, wherein I differ from many who would keep the question open.

"Your speech is printed in our newspapers, and the articles denouncing America, the Senate, and myself. This is right. Many ask why the same fairness does not show itself in England. Not a press in England which has not attributed to me sentiments and allegations which could not have been attributed had the speech been candidly laid before their readers.

"Even you, in your speech, complain of me for addressing these 'fashionable men, who, after all, did not guide the destinies of England.' Oh no! There is nothing of this in my speech. *I spoke only of the Government and its tastes*, which found an echo in Parliamentary cheers. It would have been entirely unworthy of the occasion, as it seems to me, had I stepped aside to accuse the 'fashionable,' or to praise the 'working men.' To the latter I have offered my homage at other times.

"Pardon me if I call attention to another statement. You say, 'if there be danger at all, it is from America.' How so? Not a word of

it in the speech which English newspapers misrepresented without printing. At the time of its delivery the speech was hailed as 'pacific,' and I challenge any person to read it through and find a single note of war.

"The secretary of our Peace Society writes that he proposes to print it as a 'peace tract,' Certainly, in this spirit I tried to speak.

"I have always had a deep sense of our wrongs from England—to my mind the most terrible ever offered by one friendly Power to another. These I expressed fully in my speech of September 10th, 1863, on which Lord Russell commented at Blairgowrie. Such was my love of peace—especially with England—that when our troubles were over I said nothing, hoping for a settlement. Never in the Senate or elsewhere did I utter a word. At last the late treaty was negotiated. As I think of it now, there was madness in that negotiation. It was made (1) after a new President had been elected, known to feel intensely on the *Alabama* question; and (2) after the country had been aroused by Mr. R. Johnson's maudlin career to a frame of mind which demanded its full dues. It was no sooner signed than the people condemned it, before the committee or Senate had acted. Had it been signed earlier by six months I think it might have been adopted. When it was determined to reject the treaty it became my duty to assign the reasons.

"I hope you will talk freely with Motley, who was in Washington at the time, and who will tell you to what extent my speech represented the views of all here, from the President down to the doorkeeper, and he will tell you also my own desires and hopes.

"Of course, it will be for England to open the negotiations again. If those who control her affairs prefer that the question should remain unsettled, there are many here, besides the numerous Irish, who will be pleased; but I am not in this number.

"I should be glad to know if England now shares the opinions of the law lords; to the effect that, by the concession of belligerency, the builders of war vessels were relieved from the crime of piracy. If this be the law, as I cannot doubt, then did that false concession open the dockyards and arsenals of England to a pro-slavery rebellion? So it seems. I cannot see it otherwise, and therefore I regard the concession as the first stage of the great offence.

"I hope you will see General Schenck, who is the leader of our House of Representatives. He will talk frankly and wisely. Pardon my frankness, and believe me, dear Forster,

"Sincerely yours,

"CHARLES SUMNER."

To MR. SUMNER.

"80, Eccleston Square, London,
"June 20th, 1869.

"DEAR MR. SUMNER,

"I hasten to thank you for your letter of the 8th inst., just received.

"It is very pleasant to me to find that you do not dislike the tone of the speech I sent you, though you do not, of course, agree with its argument.

"I hardly think we shall gain by dwelling on our disagreements as to past facts.

"What we do agree in is in an earnest desire that both our countries should do that which is right one to the other, and in a determination to do that which in us lies towards this result.

"It was a real pain to me to feel it my duty to publicly reply to your speech, but I must repeat how glad I am to find that nothing which I said has given you personal annoyance.

"Yours very sincerely,
"W. E. FORSTER.

"I shall be most glad to make General Schenck's acquaintance."

From MR. SUMNER.

"Boston, June 28th, 1869.

"DEAR MR. FORSTER,

"I enclose to you a copy of Mr. R. Johnson's despatch on his negotiation which has never yet seen the light.

"It was received on the morning of the 4th of

March, and the last public act of Seward and of A—— J—— was to send it confidentially to the Senate.

"You will see that on belligerency he takes the very ground now occupied by the administration of the present Government and by myself. This is the American ground. To my mind, this question is one of the most important in the Law of Nations ever presented for practical consideration, and absolutely without any authoritative precedent.

"My hope is that, however definitely decided, it will be so as most to advance civilization and the repose of nations.

"Faithfully yours,

"CHARLES SUMNER.

To MR. SUMNER.

"July 17th, 1869.

"DEAR MR. SUMNER,

"Many thanks for your vote of the 20th inst., and for the copy of Mr. R. Johnson's despatch, which I am glad to have the opportunity of seeing, but which, of course, I consider strictly confidential. As regards the Proclamation of Neutrality, I confess I am still strongly of opinion that such proclamation was in accordance with international law and a mere acknowledgment of existing facts, but it may well be that in my interpretation of international law I may be mis-

taken. I think, however, I hardly can be mistaken in my conviction that this proclamation was not made with unfriendly *animus* to your Government, because that is a matter of which I can speak from personal recollection and knowledge.

"You allude to the recognition of independence as analogous to a recognition of belligerent rights, but at the time of the proclamation I myself, and all the well-wishers of the North, drew a marked line between the [two kinds] of recognition. We acknowledged belligerent rights because there were belligerent facts, but we struggled hard and successfully against the emissaries of the South and Louis Napoleon in our determination not to recognize independence, because that was not a fact, because we trusted it never would be a fact, and were determined to do nothing which would in the slightest degree help to make it a fact.

"However, you and I agree in so many things, that I suppose we must agree to differ in this matter.

"Yours very truly,
"W. E. FORSTER."

For more than twelve months the dispute was allowed to linger on, without any vigorous attempt being made to close it. In 1871, however, a fresh effort was made to heal the sore. Lord Ripon and Sir Stafford Northcote were despatched to Washington for the purpose of concluding a fresh treaty

for the submission of the questions at issue to arbitration. They remained in America from February until May, and they had the satisfaction before they left of concluding a solemn treaty with the Government of the United States, under which the American claims to compensation for our action during the civil war were to be submitted to a High Court of International Arbitrators, who were to meet at Geneva to hear the cases of both countries in the spring of 1872. This treaty was duly ratified by the Senate, in spite of another fierce outburst of indignation on the part of Mr. Sumner, whose feeling regarding the conduct of England did not appear to have been softened either by time or by the manifest desire of Englishmen to put an end to the long-standing dispute.

But when everything thus seemed to be settled, and there was at last good hope of the final removal of the long-standing obstacle to the friendship of the two peoples, a new difficulty made its appearance in a very unexpected quarter. This was the claim for indirect damages which was set forth in the "Case" of America as it was presented to the Court of Arbitration at Geneva. Great was the indignation in England when, at the close of January, 1872, it first became known that the American Government was prepared to prefer this demand. The Cabinet was at once summoned to consider the question, and some of the members were for forthwith withdrawing from

the arbitration. Mr. Forster was strongly in favour of a more moderate and prudent course, but at the same time he felt strongly as to the unfairness of the demand made by America. "Clearly," he writes in his diary (*January 30th*, 1872), "this claim is sharp practice by the Americans, as the protocols prove that they had waived the indirect claims. Our press is very indignant and exigeant, the *Daily News* leading. A cool head and a cool temper wanted. I asked Tenterden to dinner to talk the matter over with him. He is strong against diplomatic negotiation, and recommends a protest and refusal to submit the indirect claims to the arbitration, to be delivered through our agent to the tribunal to the United States agent, both being appointed by Article 2 of the Treaty. Thereby diplomatic wrangling would be avoided, and the Yankees would not be forced to immediate reply while the Presidential caucus is at its height. I never felt any matter so serious. (*January 31st*) Drew up a memorandum urging communication through the agents, rather than by despatch, on the Alabama hitch. Took it to Granville; then sent it to Gladstone, asking him whether he would object to its circulation. . . . Found a note from G—— assenting to circulation, so sent F—— off with the box. (*February 2nd*) My box returned. All the ministers minutes against me, except Gladstone, Granville, Ripon, and Chancellor."

The question was discussed in the Cabinet, but the opinion was not favourable to Mr. Forster's proposal, who had to give way. He did what he could, however, to make the passage in the Queen's speech on the subject as friendly and open as possible. "Ripon was miserable, and no wonder," he notes in his diary. "He will be blamed for the possibility of this sharp practice, but in fact the Cabinet are responsible, as we discussed every word. . . . Sheriff's dinner at Ripon's. Sat between Cardwell and Gladstone. Interesting talk with him. He gave me his calculation for estimating the war prolongation claim at 1600 millions sterling. (*February 4th*) In the evening a circulation box with a telegram from Thornton that it was Fish's private opinion that the discretionary arbitration was at an end, and that the Americans would withdraw their arbitrator and counsel. Matters look as serious as I expected. (*February 5th*) Called on Granville to talk over American matters with him. While there, Gladstone came. I said our case as regarded the interpretation of the Treaty was much the best, but the Americans might persuade themselves they had a case. Ours was a circumstantial argument, and 'needed as good a speaker as you (Gladstone) to make it clear.' At which he was indignant. He was glad to find me, wanting to ask me whether I would assent to changing 'understood' to 'held' in the speech. If so,

as he thought the rest of the Cabinet would, he would telegraph to Ripon, who was gone to Osborne, to tell the Queen of the alteration, supposing he himself consented. . . . I did not assent. Met Ripon at his house on his return from Osborne. He said I did right about the clause. (*February 9th*) Called upon Adams at Maurigny's Hotel a little after ten. Leaving to-day for the States, and glad to see me. After civil talk about his wife's health, which called him back, etc., he expressed his surprise at our feelings. I explained it as very natural. We never intended this arbitration, etc., etc. Well, if we took this ground the arbitration was at an end, and America would never make another treaty with us. I think he said if we insisted on the indirect claims being excluded they must withdraw. This was not encouraging; but just then Evarts came in, and I rehearsed the conversation, which went on for some time, but ended in Evarts's asking why, having made in our despatch and the Queen's speech our declaration that we did not consider the indirect claims within the reference, we should not go on with the arbitration. 'How can we,' said I, 'when we are determined not to pay any award on them?' 'But you might let this be clearly understood.' This was what I wanted from him, as it was very much what Ripon and I wished. So I said, 'I do not understand Mr. Adams to have said this.' Upon which Adams

immediately and most fully assented, and Evarts and the latter kept on asking his question, to which I gave no answer, which would, I suppose, show them I did not dissent. I took care to say I subscribed every word of the despatch and speech, but I thought Gladstone had in his speech gone too far. We parted very friendly, though with a mutual sense of the seriousness of the crisis."

A few days later General Schenck unofficially proposed four possible plans by way of settling the difficulty. (1) A lump sum paid by England; (2) a maximum sum paid to cover all claims, direct or indirect, supposing the arbitrators found against us; (3) Proceeding with the arbitration under our protest that we did not consider the indirect claims within the treaty, and could not abide by any decision against us as respected them, or pay in respect of them any gross sum or portion thereof; (4) An exchange of Vancouver's Island for the indirect claims, upon the principle that both treaties were open to two interpretations.

The wrangle between the two Governments went on from day to day, amid the most profound anxiety on the part of the friends of peace in both countries. The public on this side of the Atlantic felt strongly regarding what was considered as the sharp practice of Mr. Bancroft Davis, the American counsel, and unpleasant recriminations began to pass from side to side. As Forster had said when

the difficulty first arose, a cool head and a cool temper were both needed by any one who should attempt to keep the treaty alive. His own anxiety on the subject was excessive, and he lost no opportunity of strengthening the pacific section in the Cabinet, whilst he used all his private influence with Mr. Adams, General Schenck, and other leading Americans in England to induce them to back the efforts of those who were seeking to carry the arbitration through. It is no secret now that the Cabinet was the scene of more than one heated discussion during these anxious weeks, and that the tension was so severe at times as almost to threaten the existence of the Ministry. Indeed, whilst the dispute was still at its height, Forster and Lord Ripon came to the determination to resign if ministers accepted a resolution of which Lord Russell had given notice, pledging us to withdraw from the reference if the indirect claims were not abandoned before the Court of Arbitration met at Geneva.

His diary casts valuable side-lights upon the state of feeling in London, and especially in the inner political circles, during this momentous time.

"*April 24th.*—Afternoon party at Buckingham Palace. Told Schenck at the palace that he must find a peg for Ripon and me within the next few days, or we could not keep the treaty alive. Granville told me that Schenck had told him that he had telegraphed to Fish, as part of his conver-

sation with him, that he, Granville, had said that if the claims were not withdrawn we could not go on. He said he had not said that, but he thought it might stop. I said I did not mind his pressing and frightening the Americans, but that we must not be committed to this. He assented, saying that he would set it right in a letter."

A proposal came from the United States Government that a supplemental treaty should be signed, under which America should drop the indirect claims in consideration of a mutual agreement that the contentions thereanent should be the guide of the conduct of the two nations hereafter.

Ministers, however, were much inclined to prefer another plan, proposed by General Schenck, which was that, after an interchange of notes, Mr. Adams should undertake officially to propose the withdrawal of the claims at Geneva.

"Diary, *May 10th.*—Adams, Mrs. and Miss Adams came to breakfast. Satisfactory and very confidential conversation with him after breakfast, he telling me that Fish and the President had the Senate well in hand; that he had made his proposition about withdrawal not without understanding with Fish, who had sent to him before he left. As we were walking away, I asked him what would happen if, after all, we could not agree, and he told me very confidentially that his instructions were to go to Geneva and to ask the

arbitrators for the decision whether we went or not. He admitted it was doubtful whether the arbitration would go on, but Grant had always been in favour of that course."

Eventually ministers agreed to fall in with the American suggestion of a supplemental treaty, or rather of a supplemental article to the existing treaty. Yet even then a sharp crisis had to be faced. When this supplemental article was submitted to the Senate it was altered in such a manner that the English Government felt that they could not accept it. The arbitration had been adjourned whilst negotiations were in progress, and Lord Russell's resolution, directly hostile to the American contention, had also been hung up pending the course of events. Now, however, it seemed as if the last chance of a pacific settlement had failed. In the opinion of most Englishmen the action of the Senate looked as though there was a deliberate intention on the part of the leading politicians of America to prevent the arbitration from coming to anything. In these circumstances Lord Russell resolved to proceed with his resolution. Within the Cabinet the state of tension still existed. On June 3rd, Lord Russell moved his resolution in the House of Lords against going into arbitration until the indirect claims had actually been withdrawn. On the sixth, when the adjourned debate on the resolution was resumed, and when it seemed

likely that the fateful division would be taken, a dramatic incident, which was not however to be without its parallel hereafter, occurred. Just in the nick of time a letter was received from General Schenck, stating that he had private advices from Mr. Fish as to the American secretary's interpretation of the supplemental article. This interpretation was of such a character as to satisfy English demands. When the news became known in the House of Lords, Lord Russell withdrew his resolution, and the debate came to an end without producing the results anticipated from it.

On June 15th the Court of Arbitration met at Geneva. It had been brought together in spite of difficulties which might well have been deemed insuperable. For the first time in the history of the civilized world one of the great powers of Europe had allowed her policy and conduct to be submitted to the decision of an International Court. Great indeed had been the sacrifice of old traditions and of hereditary pride which this resolution on the part of England had imposed upon her; and when that great sacrifice had been made, the difficulties in the way of those who were anxious to submit a great international dispute to a more just and beneficent arbitrament than that of the sword had only begun. This is not the place in which to weigh the merits of the diplomatic disputes between the Cabinets of Washington and London. The reader has seen something, how-

ever, of the gravity of those disputes. As a matter of fact, when the Court met at Geneva no one knew exactly what would happen. We had nothing more than a vague understanding with the American Government as to the withdrawal of the indirect claims, and the greatest uncertainty prevailed in London as to whether the arbitration would or would not proceed. The meeting of the Cabinet which was held that day was almost unique in its character, and as no State secret is now involved in its proceedings, I may quote Forster's description of it from his diary.

"*June* 15*th*.—Cabinet at 12. Arbitration meeting at Geneva to-day, and we waited for news. From 12 to 2 on Parliamentary business; then adjourned to 3, some of us lunching meantime with Granville at Foreign Office. No telegram with real news; a telegram taking nearly four hours sent off by Tenterden at half-past eleven before the meeting. Again an adjournment to 5.30. Still no telegram. We had exhausted subjects of talk, and were listlessly looking at one another.

"'The Opposition would snigger if they saw us,' said Granville; and, soon after, he said to me, 'I wonder whether West has a chess-board?' disappeared, and brought it to me wrapped up in a handkerchief; and we took three chairs on to the terrace outside the Cabinet room, one for each of us and one for the chess-board. We had

three games, and, alas! he won two of them. Still no telegram, and we went off to dinner, with agreement that we should be summoned to Halifax's when it came. . . . Called at Halifax's; still no news; went on to Lady Ripon's; no news there; Schenck had an early telegram with nothing in. On our return we called at the Foreign Office with Glyn, but they knew nothing.

"*June 16th, Sunday.*—A cab soon after breakfast with telegram from Tenterden, saying little except that arbitration had adjourned till Monday. I thought, however, from its tone that probably Adams would try to move out the indirect claims, and, after Church and early dinner, I went off to Granville to say this and urge help to Adams. His footman told me he was gone some time ago to a Cabinet at Gladstone's. I went on, and found they had been at it for nearly two hours. Somehow or other the messenger had missed me. My expectation was fully justified—a confidential telegram from Tenterden saying that Adams was then moving. We sent a short helpful telegram, only —— really opposing. I was in time somewhat to alter it. Granville drove me off in high glee, calling at the Foreign Office to see Harcourt. After all, this treaty, which has as many lives as as a cat, will live."

On June 19th the arbitrators rejected altogether the indirect claims, and there was thus an end to

that which might have been the cause of the most serious feuds between the two countries.

To his Wife.

"House of Commons, 6.30 p.m., Thursday.

"Hip, hip, hip, hooray! My dearest, the final settlement of the indirect claims came during questions to-day, and Gladstone announced it amid great cheers on our side and the disgust of the Tories. This is a good year now, whatever happens.

"Thine in haste,

"W. E. FORSTER."

Forster's position in the House of Commons had of course steadily increased in importance during his tenure of office as Vice-President of the Council. In 1868, when he took his seat beside Mr. Gladstone on the Treasury Bench, he was comparatively untried as a minister, and great as were the expectations of those who knew him well, and who had watched his career in Yorkshire, there were not a few persons who believed that his reputation far surpassed his merits, and that he was, as one of them had bluntly expressed it, "a greatly overrated man." At the end of 1873 it is certain that, whatever might be the views men held with regard to his educational policy, no one would have echoed the opinion I have just quoted as to his personal abilities. The

Ministry of 1868 was described at the time as a Ministry of all the talents, and it was undoubtedly remarkable for the number of men distinguished in political life who took part in it. Unquestionably, however, next to Mr. Gladstone, the man who made the greatest advances in the estimation of the House of Commons during those years was Mr. Forster.

The disadvantages under which he laboured, owing to his lack of a university training and the comparatively late time of life at which he entered Parliament, were successfully overcome by his energy and his enthusiasm. Out of doors his name had become a shibboleth, and party rancour was freely discharged upon his head; but even those who assailed him most virulently were constrained to admit that he was at least a formidable antagonist, whilst within the House of Commons there was a growing opinion that but for his unfortunate feud with the Radicals of Birmingham his claim to the post of lieutenant to Mr. Gladstone would have been indisputable. Mr. Gladstone himself, during 1873, more than once entrusted him with the duty of representing him during his own absence from the House of Commons, and the man who in 1870 was still without a seat in the Cabinet was three years later universally recognized as one of the few men in the front rank in English political life.

I have had occasion to mention already the

feeling of his colleagues and subordinates in the Privy Council Office towards him. It would be a great mistake, however, to suppose that it was only on the part of those who were brought into almost daily contact with him that this feeling was entertained. The Vice-President of the Council touches many different departments of the public service, and has to do with an almost innumerable army of officials. There is, for example, the South Kensington Department, around which many disputes have gathered, and upon which many jealousies, professional and personal, are centred. I believe that I speak with accuracy the sentiments of the officers of that department when I say that, without any disparagement to the distinguished men who have succeeded Mr. Forster in the office of Vice-President of the Council, there is no one whose name is cherished so warmly as his, nor one who has left behind him a tradition of such unfailing loyalty towards all with whom, in his official capacity, he was brought in contact.

But there was another and still larger body of men than those associated with him in the public service with whom Mr. Forster had to deal. These were the school teachers of England. The author of the school system of our country, he was in a certain degree responsible for bringing into existence that great army of elementary teachers in whose hands the training of the children of the nation is now placed. When

the Education Act was first put into operation, the confusion that necessarily existed in the educational districts almost amounted to chaos. It was no easy thing for the head of the Education Department to place himself in anything like satisfactory relations with the vast body of teachers who had to be suddenly enrolled in order to meet the new wants of the nation. Forster, however, made it his business to put himself into the closest possible connection with these men and women. Just as in his early days in Yorkshire he had delighted in the hours which he spent in his own schools at Burley or in those of Canon Jackson at Leeds, and had there acquired by personal observation a sympathetic knowledge of the teacher's difficulties and disappointments, so now, as Minister of Education, he lost no opportunity which offered itself of personally associating with those to whom the practical work of teaching had been entrusted. It mattered little that the teacher with whom he came in contact was a man of no influence, and perhaps of only moderate ability. His work formed the tie which united him with Forster; and he was certain to obtain the kindliest and most sympathetic consideration for his trials and grievances if he laid them before him. Blunt indeed might be the manner in which Forster expressed himself, but beneath the blunt exterior his interlocutor speedily discovered the kindest of hearts and the most loyal of spirits; and thus it came to pass that, even at the time when

Mr. Forster's name was being held up to execration by the leaders of the League, he had no more enthusiastic body of admirers in the country than the teachers of our common schools.

A word must be said here as to his personal position whilst he was a member of the 1868 Administration. The business of the country was at that time wonderfully prosperous, and he shared in its prosperity. At the end of 1871 he found himself free from any kind of anxiety in pecuniary matters, and from that time forward he may be said to have been a rich man. Among other personal incidents of interest which marked the period was his election as a member of the distinguished little club known as Grillion's. He had long been a regular visitor at the Cosmopolitan, many members of which well remember as one of the features of the meetings his racy and vigorous talk upon all manner of subjects, great and small. He now became almost as regular in attendance at the famous dinners and breakfasts of Grillion's—at which none but the most distinguished Englishmen of their day are to be found, and at which the representatives of parties the most directly antagonistic are able to meet in friendly social intercourse. Forster's love of society was undoubtedly great. He delighted in frank and unrestrained conversation, especially with those from whom he differed, and was never happier than when in argument he met a foeman worthy of himself. Under the tremendous pressure of his public work

during these busy and eventful years, and amid all the perplexities and anxieties of his position as educational minister, he found a constant source of relaxation and recreation in those social engagements which his advancement in public estimation had opened to him.

How he impressed others who encountered him in social life may be learned from the following extracts from the memoir of the late Dr. Norman Macleod, whom he met at Balmoral whilst he was there in attendance upon the Queen:—"We have here," says Dr. Macleod, writing from Balmoral, "Helps, and Mr. Forster, M.P., and we have had tremendous theological talks till 2 a.m. I keep my own not amiss. I have the greatest possible respect for Forster's abilities and truthfulness. . . . The Queen has asked me to remain till to-morrow. I hope to have another set-to with the M.P. He seems to expect the same, as he said 'Hurrah!' when he heard I was to remain." A year later (1872) Dr. Macleod says in his diary: "I preached at Balmoral. . . . When last at Balmoral I met Forster, the Cabinet minister, there. He and Helps and I had great arguments on all theological subjects till very late. I never was more impressed by any man as deep, independent, *thoroughly* honest, and sincere. I conceived a great love for him. I never met a statesman whom for high-minded honesty and *justice* I would sooner follow. He will be Premier some day."

CHAPTER II.

VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES.

THE opening weeks of 1874 found Mr. Forster still standing face to face with a powerful political party which regarded him not so much with distrust as with positive hatred, and which was resolved, if possible, to secure his expulsion from the ranks of the Liberal party, if not from political life. His sins in connection with the passing of the Education Act, the chief of which was the fact that as minister of education he had thought more about education than about the disestablishment of the Church of England, were still bitterly remembered against him; and even in his own borough of Bradford there were many who had vowed that, if possible, they would punish him for his offences by depriving him of his seat in Parliament. Some idea of the malignant unfairness with which he was at that time being attacked by those who insisted that he alone was responsible for every portion of the Education Act with which they themselves did not happen to agree, and who were careful to distinguish between him and his col-

leagues, especially Mr. Gladstone, may be formed by a perusal of the language of one of the most powerful of their number, Mr. Chamberlain, then Mayor of Birmingham.

Speaking at a political supper in December, 1873, shortly after Mr. Forster had made his speech in vindication of the Education Act at Liverpool, Mr. Chamberlain said, "He observed in the newspapers that the Right Hon. Mr. Forster had been making what had been called a great speech at Liverpool. No doubt he had been somewhat dissatisfied with the results of recent elections, for, as they were aware, Bradford, Nottingham, Middlesbrough, and a score other places which he could mention, had followed the example of Birmingham, and returned candidates pledged to oppose Mr. Forster's favourite policy. In Bradford, at all events, the victory of the Liberals was significant, because it was probable that the same party that had secured the majority upon the school board would also have a majority in the Parliamentary election, in which case the Right Hon. William Forster would no longer sit for Bradford, or, if he sat at all, would sit only as returned by Conservative votes. . . . He hoped they were prepared to make all necessary allowances for the fond affection of the parent. They all knew that a father looked with pride upon his first-born, and was apt to be rather charitable towards its defects, but at the same time he (Mr. Chamberlain) was bound to say

that he thought Mr. Forster's infatuation about his little bill was really beyond all reasonable measure—(laughter and applause). There were two good features in the bill, the first being a provision made for the establishment of school boards, by which the ratepayers had obtained some control over the institutions to which they had contributed; and the second being the permissive enforcement of compulsory attendance at school. These principles, however, only existed in the bill in consequence of the agitation and discussion which was raised by the Education League. When they had considered those two principles they had considered almost all that they could accept as praiseworthy in the bill. Its effect in other respects had been to delay the great system of national education which Mr. Forster declared to be necessary and desirable at the time when he first undertook to bring forward his measure. His Act had thrown obstacles in the way of such a system. . . . It had thrown the education of the children of this country into the hands of two great ecclesiastical organizations, which had unfortunately been foremost in obstructing the prosperity and advancement of the nation. . . . The object of the Liberal party in England, throughout the continent of Europe and in America, had been to wrest the education of the young out of the hands of the priests, to whatever denomination they might belong. It would be the crowning

triumph of what was called Mr. Forster's statesmanship that he had delayed this admirable consummation for perhaps another generation."

It is unnecessary to comment either upon the good taste of the speaker or upon the accuracy of his contention that it was only owing to the action of the League that the two main provisions in the bill—provisions which were contained in the original memorandum on the subject submitted to the Cabinet by Mr. Forster in 1869—had been included in the measure. But Mr. Chamberlain's language and temper deserve to be noted, inasmuch as they fairly represented the language and temper of most of the supporters of the League in those days, when a large section of the English public still laboured under the belief that the 25th clause was a provision artfully devised by Mr. Forster for the purpose of adding to the endowments of the Church of England. How high feeling ran in Bradford was shown a few weeks after Mr. Chamberlain made his speech. Mr. Forster went down to visit his constituents, one of his objects being to meet those who differed from him, in order that he might discuss with them in a frank manner the contested points in his Education Bill. One of the leading Radicals invited the principal supporters of the League to meet Mr. Forster at dinner at his house. The dinner duly took place, and the education question was fully discussed. "Hammer and tongs after

dinner," says Forster in his diary; "but I held my own, not committing myself, and not, I think, irritating them. —— talked to me till half-past twelve, trying all he could to frighten me into concession. Bradford prospects look very bad." So bad, indeed, did his prospects at Bradford look at this time that one of his truest and kindest friends there, Mr. William Byles, the proprietor of the *Bradford Observer*, had already advised him to look out for a new constituency, as he did not see any hope of his being again returned by the old one.

Forster, however, was not a man who was easily frightened, and the difficulties and dangers which would have daunted some only nerved him to more resolute and vigorous action. Barely a week after the dinner at Bradford, when his prospects seemed so gloomy, the dramatically sudden and unexpected dissolution of the Parliament of 1868 took place. On Friday evening, January 23rd, 1874, the rumour that Parliament was to be dissolved began to circulate in well-informed quarters in London. The next morning the news fell like a thunderclap upon the country. The secret had been well kept, and for the best of all reasons, namely, that it had only existed for a few hours. Ministers were in the same position as private members. Not one of them had been able to take any preliminary steps towards preparing their constituents for the great and unexpected event by which a struggle

which was destined to be of supreme importance in the history of the country was precipitated. Instantly after the issue of Mr. Gladstone's address to the electors of Greenwich, the members of the Cabinet dispersed in order to fight their own individual battles in the constituencies.

No one had a harder task before him than Mr. Forster. The Birmingham Radicals, who were at that time aspiring to supremacy in the counsels of their party, had chosen to make him the scapegoat upon whose back was to be laid the sins of the whole Ministry; and in Bradford, at all events, they had succeeded in gaining a large number of supporters. Among these were the men who had really formed the election committee of 1868, when Mr. Forster stood with Mr. Miall. When Forster reached Bradford by an early train from London on that Saturday on which all England was ringing with the news of the dissolution, he found that the committee of 1868 could no longer be relied upon, and that even his old election agent had turned against him. It was a heavy blow, but he set to work at once with his own thoroughness and energy to organize victory for himself. His diary shows what was the work which he got through on that first day of the contest.

"*January 24th.*— . . . Went down to Bradford with Stansfeld, he going to Halifax, I to Bradford. . . . Went first to Victoria Hotel, dear Eds [Mr. E. P. Arnold-Forster] meeting me at the station;

then on to Wade's office, where I found Simon. Wade told me that he could not act as agent—had told Killick; so I went on to Killick. Sent for dear old Byles. Wrote my address. Gave it Byles for placards, and sent it to *Telegraph* people, who soon got it into later edition—so I first in the field. Engaged circus for Monday night, not being able to get hall. Nothing hardly could look more dreary. An agent to appoint; no committee, no chairman, no rooms, no organization—everybody trying to frighten me except Killick; but I believe I shall win. Some comfort from M——, the nine-hours man, as I was leaving; and from W——, the manufacturer, who went with me by train and was very loyal. Returned to Burley and my dearest by 5.55 train. Left Eds, who was most useful, to hear result of Liberal Registration Caucus, which was simply to ask Miall whether he would stand, and meet again on Tuesday."

It may seem strange to some that Forster should have been thus cruelly deserted by the men who but a few years before had shed tears of joy when they learned that he had passed safely through the ordeal of an election petition; and it may be that here and there harsh judgments will be passed upon the character of the Bradford Liberals because of their action at this time. But so far as the overwhelming majority of the Liberals of Bradford were concerned, though they

turned from him and fought him, they never lost their old respect for him, and were no worse friends with him in private because they believed that they were bound to become his enemies in public. It was not merely the education question upon which a difference had arisen between him and his party. The larger question of party organization was also at issue. Bradford was one of the first towns in England to adopt the Birmingham method of organization, commonly known as the Caucus. Some of the leading party men in the borough sought, even so early as 1874, to raise the question of the independence of representatives. They held that it was the duty of a member to submit himself unreservedly to the judgment of the local committee or caucus, and that, no matter how long he might have sat for a particular constituency, and no matter how great might be his public services or his reputation, he was bound to acknowledge, not the constituency as a whole, but the caucus as the master of his fate, and to leave it to that body to determine whether he should or should not be allowed to continue to represent the electors in Parliament. This contention was set forth with great plainness later on, when Mr. Forster had to wage vigorous battle against a principle so degrading to the position of a member of Parliament; but even so early as 1874 it had begun to make itself apparent, and it added to the bitterness of

the relations between himself and the official organization of the Liberal party in Bradford.

To one of his old friends, Mr. L. Tylor, who worked vigorously on his behalf in this 1874 election, I am indebted for some reminiscences of Forster's relations with his constituents which may be fitly introduced here: "I think my most noteworthy impression of your dear husband," writes Mr. Tylor to Mrs. Forster, "was the extraordinary relation that existed between him and his constituents. It was very strange, but Forster was more a Yorkshireman than the Yorkshiremen themselves—not in the popular idea of Yorkshiremen as being rugged and bluff and outspoken and strong, although in these points he was typical of his adopted county—but especially in his reticence. Any one who knows Craven will see the curious inheritance of character which the men take from their country. Rugged and bare, uninviting, often forbidding, there seems so little tenderness in the scarred and lonely moor, that a stranger might pass by without guessing at the wealth of life hidden in its numberless recesses, its nestling woods, its secret pastures. You know it, and can bear witness that, once having found the treasures it conceals from inquisitive eyes, you would not exchange it for all the flaunting luxuriance and sweet softness of the South. It is so with the seemingly hard men of the North. They hide their feelings, and would sooner be misjudged than

judged by any but their own kith and kin. And they do not mind hard judgment, and hard blows, given openly and fairly by their own people. They will not yield, and they will not ask their enemy to yield. They are fighting folk, and they expect the weaker man to go to the wall without favour. They found a man after their own heart in Forster. It seems all so strange and extraordinary to any one who knew the incessant heart-burnings and divisions among the Bradford Liberals, and the determined set their leaders made against the man who was the truest representative of all their best qualities that England could have furnished, to be able to say that the Bradford men liked Forster better than any one else, even when they voted against him. But I have been told this scores of times, and the text ran pretty much the same: 'We are men, and stick to our party; but there never was any one like Forster.' I recollect in 1874, when there was a great meeting at St. George's Hall, talking with one of the leaders. He said, 'We can fill the hall in five minutes with our own men if we choose;' and I said, 'We shall be delighted, for they will leave the hall Forster's men.' 'Never fear, lad,' he replied; 'but we'll do fair.' That night there were some four thousand people there, and half of these were in well-distinguished patches, sitting perfectly quiet, never applauding and never hissing, save just enough to show what they could have done had they wished. Forster

pointed them out to me, and said, 'They will all vote dead against me, but they do not like it.' And so they did vote, and so they did not like voting, but they acted with what they thought their party."

This vivid and truthful sketch will give the reader some idea of the peculiar relations between Forster and his Radical constituents; though no words can enable any one who has not lived in Yorkshire, and enjoyed a knowledge both of the strength and of the weakness of the Yorkshire character based upon personal experience, fully to comprehend the nature of those relations. That election of 1874 was, in Forster's case, a kind of Homeric fight between himself on the one hand, and his old friends the Radicals and the caucus-men of Bradford on the other. Thanks to the energy with which he had acted at the outset, he had got the start. Before the local leaders could determine upon candidates to represent them, he was already in the field. On the Monday evening following the Saturday on which he reached Bradford, he addressed his first meeting in the Alhambra, which was crowded in every part. "I saw that meeting was against me," he notes in his diary, "but well heard, think I somewhat turned them." His speech was a defence of the Education Act, and of the freedom of choice which the poor parent was allowed to have as to the school to which his children should be sent. One personal

appeal he made to the electors: "The enormous majority of my electors," he said, "are working-men, and I do not stand here to flatter or fawn upon them. I never do so. But I may ask you to remember two or three facts, and bear them in mind when you fix your cross upon the ballot list and vote either for or against me; and these are, that, in the first place, I was an old ten-hours man; in the second place, I have a claim to have done something to give you the vote; in the third place, what I have done in getting you the vote, I shall try to do for your fellow-labourers, the agricultural labourers. I have a right to be believed about that because of what I have done. Fourthly, I have had something to do with giving you freedom in voting. I do not think many people have had more to do with it. I ask you to remember these facts when you may be asked to vote against me because of this 25th clause."

At the close of his speech Mr. Forster had to submit to that which is always a favourite performance among the ardent politicians of the West Riding during an election—the "heckling" of the candidate. This consists in pouring in upon him from every quarter of the room, in the most rapid succession, questions upon every conceivable subject, some of which have been framed with remarkable ingenuity, for the special purpose of embarrassing the unfortunate person to whom they are addressed. Forster was one of the few

men, perhaps, who really enjoyed this process. There was something to him positively exhilarating in this brisk give-and-take in argument and assertion before a crowded audience. His speeches often moved men deeply; but it was in his replies to a cross-examination more or less hostile, that he afforded the greatest delight to his auditors. Of course, upon this occasion, he had to submit to a fire of fierce interrogatories on the subject of the Education Act, and he stuck boldly to his guns. One person asked why he had not waited until he was asked by the Liberal Association before presenting himself as a candidate. "I am blamed," replied Mr. Forster, "because being your member I have asked for re-election. Now, it has been the ruling practice in your borough, as elsewhere, for sitting members to seek re-election, and is a man who has served you for thirteen years not to come forward and ask you whether you will say you are willing to return him again? And has a man a right to be a member of the Cabinet, and a member of the Government of the country which has advised the Queen to dissolve Parliament, and must he himself wait for any meeting, however important, before he takes his part in carrying out that advice? I deny I have broken away from the leaders of the party (in Bradford). I can show my friend that there is no opinion that I have deserted, and if there has been a change of opinions on this Education Act it is not on my part, and that I

hold the opinions I formerly held. My friends ask me whether I take comfort in deserting the leaders of the party. What I do take comfort in is in not deserting my own convictions."

The picture of the struggle thus commenced given in his own diary, though bare and uncoloured, is full of suggestion :—

"*January 27th.*—Matters still looking up. A good nucleus of a committee at our rooms at Sunbridge. Agree to send a circular to every voter, asking him to return it if willing to support me, and ordered 25,000 copies of corrected *Telegraph* report of my speech also to send. Tories held a meeting, and, with John Tayler in the chair, agreed not to bring out a candidate but to support me. Changed afterwards into supporting me and Ripley. John Tayler told me at hotel. I said I was obliged, but there must be no misunderstanding; I should remain a Liberal as before. He behaved like a thorough gentleman, saying that was the clear understanding.

"*January 28th.*—Went by 9.18 train to Bradford. At meeting at Alhambra last evening, called of the Liberal clubs by ticket (I having given up to them the room), Godwin brought out in place of Miall [who had retired on plea of ill-health], and Hardaker [working-man] adopted; that is, two candidates started in opposition to me. A meeting of friends and supporters called at our large committee-room, which went off fairly well. Sam

Lister came, and spoke most vigorously and heartily for me; also Joe Oddy, Simeon Townend, etc. I spoke to very large meeting in Pullan's Music Hall, and carried meeting with me. Illingworth had given me excellent opening the night before, by saying Bradford ought to show itself so dissatisfied with the author of the Educational Act as not to be content to have him as its representative. Thompson moved vote to me, seconded by Wade, and carried by immense majority. Lane still in the chair. Dear Eds again with me. We all took up our abode at the Victoria. Two ominous Home Rulers saw me at my large committee-room, but I answered Home Rule question frankly at meeting, and I think that answered.

"*January 29th.*—Steam getting up; friends flocking in; Killick working well; but perplexities great. Began my ward meetings. Meetings on the whole good, especially the last, where Walter Robertshaw asked me many questions, and moved vote against me on account of 25th clause, but I beat him by large majority, and carried my vote at all the meetings."

And so the fight went on, the "steam getting up" more and more on both sides. Indeed, Forster, who never sought to deceive himself when he was engaged in work of this kind, notes in his diary the "very enthusiastic meeting for Godwin and Hardaker" held one day, and his own defeat by his opponents at another, remark-

ing, "I fought them fiercely, knowing pluck my only chance."

"*February 2nd.*—Went in early; saw deputation of butchers; explained my action as regards cattle, and satisfied them. In afternoon an hour or so on my speech. Matters picking up; Ward committees well at work. . . . To my meeting at St. George's Hall at 7.30. Immense number of platform friends. Room crowded to the full—the finest meeting I ever attended, and I think my best speech. Enormous majority for me—not many questions, but meeting convulsed with laughter by Dicky Delaney's friendly question. Overwhelming majority for me."

"*February 3rd.*—Steam up nearly to bursting all day. Went round to all the committee-rooms in the evening, to stir them up to work. A healthy look everywhere. After return from tour round committee-rooms, put my cross (×) against the calculation of polling which I thought most likely, and put myself down for 12,000 votes. Very strong articles in *Times* and *Daily News* against a letter, from Sir Titus Salt (Godwin and Hardaker's chairman), disowning me as a Liberal. We printed many thousand handbills, containing the *Times* article, and best part of *Daily News*, and I took round late editions of the *Telegraph* containing them.

"*February 4th.*—The polling day. Soon after 9 went with Law and Edward, in Law's open

carriage, round the committee-rooms and polling-places. Our friends cheerful everywhere; but at Little Horton I feared the polling was slack. However, as afternoon came on, our friends were more cheerful, and declared that they were nearly polled out. I voted at the East Ward about 3, for self and Ripley. The enemy had covered the walls with 'Plump for Ripley,' but we had posted over it; and we also covered the walls with, 'Split for Forster.' Killick, Eds, and I dined together at the Victoria about 5, and went to the counting at 6. The first paper I caught sight of had the two middle crosses (Godwin and Hardaker); but I soon became comfortable, as at every table I saw my crosses turned up. The actual counting began about 9, and ended about 11. I went back to the hotel, where Jane with Flo had arrived, to tell them I believed myself safe, and then went back for the final declaration, which was made by the town clerk before midnight—Forster, 11,945; Ripley, 10,223; Godwin, 8398; Hardaker, 8115. I proposed thanks to mayor, town clerk, etc., Godwin seconded, Hardaker supported. About 20,050 voters polled, only 32 bad papers.

"*February 5th.*—A congratulatory day. We all went back by 4.50 train. All the dear villagers out to receive me. I made them a short speech, and then went to dinner. Dear Mr. Jackson came to rejoice with us."

It is hardly necessary to add to this picture of a hard fight, such as Mr. Forster delighted in when it was forced upon him, deeply as he undoubtedly felt the defection of his old friends. The reader will, however, be able to form some idea of the spirit and energy with which he threw himself into a difficult task from these extracts from his diary. The result of the election was certainly an immense personal triumph for Mr. Forster. Although he had to fight the whole Radical party in the borough, and its official organization, he succeeded in polling a majority of all the electors on the register. "I am glad to believe," he said, in his address of thanks, "that the contest has left no unkind feeling between me and the minority, who, chiefly upon one particular question, have thought it right to oppose me. While I regret this disagreement, I respect their opinions."

But although a notable victory thus fell to the lot of Mr. Forster himself, the Liberal party as a whole was defeated throughout the country. That the defeat was due in part to the course which the Government had taken on the question of education is not to be disputed. There were other questions, however, which had contributed at least as largely to bring about that defeat, whilst there was also an undoubted popular reaction towards Conservatism, to a certain extent due to the extreme character of the opinions held and the

proposals put forth by the left wing of the Liberal party. In the middle of February the Cabinet met, and it was resolved not to wait for the meeting of the new House of Commons, but, in accordance with the precedent set in 1868, to resign forthwith.

To his Wife.

"Education Department, Whitehall,
"February 17th, 1874.

"Well, I am getting through my work quite as well as I could expect, and have to-day made my minutes about the poor beasties, both for Huxley and Simon. . . . We had a very interesting evening—decided practically to resign, though the papers to-day anticipate our final decision, as matters have to be arranged with the Queen."

"February 18th, 1874.

"We are now really resigned, and most assuredly I am resigned to the resignation. It is very pleasant and touching to me to have such hearty and regretful leave-takings from the officials. . . . Who my successor will be I do not know. I have very nearly right-sided my papers, but am up to the ears in them."

From his Diary.

"*February 20th*, 1874.—Last day at office. Farewells, and, after writing to my dearest, my

last act at the office, cleared out. Low work; everybody, almost, really sorry to lose me, and I depressed by leaving the workmen, though glad to leave the work. A headache, so after a slight dinner at the Athenæum with Hutton, off to bed, finding a kind note from Smith, saying he was not going to follow me, but Sandon was."

During the session of 1874, he took a prominent part in the House, frequently leading it in the absence of Mr. Gladstone, and he at the same time busied himself much with public affairs out of Parliament, especially with questions affecting the slave trade, regarding which the strength of his feeling certainly did not diminish as time passed.

The session did not pass over without another attempt, on the part of the League party, to introduce an alteration in the Education Act. This came in the shape of a motion by Mr. Richard for the abolition of the 25th clause. Forster stoutly opposed it on the old ground of the injustice which would be done to the indigent parent in compelling him to send his child to a school of the character of which he might not approve. To his surprise and regret, Mr. Richard was supported by some of his old colleagues in Mr. Gladstone's Government who had been heartily with him at the time when the bill was passed. On a division, Mr. Richard's proposal was defeated by 373 to 128 votes. "I could

not help telling Goschen," remarks Forster, "that they had not got much by throwing me over."

In June the question of appointing a Minister of Education was raised by Sir Lyon Playfair, and Forster gave his support to the proposal, his experience having led him to feel that the Education Department could never receive the attention it deserved until it was placed under the charge of a minister who should have full responsibility for it, and who would be able to devote all his time to educational matters. It happened, however, that this view was not that held by Mr. Gladstone, who looked at the question from the standpoint of an ex-Prime Minister, and as the leader of a party. Mr. Gladstone wrote to Lord Granville, begging him to ask Forster not to support Sir Lyon Playfair's motion. The letter did not reach Mr. Forster's hands until after the debate had taken place. It gave him, however, the opportunity of saying what he felt with regard to the changed attitude of his colleagues on the education question.

To LORD GRANVILLE.

"80, Eccleston Square,
"June 16th, 1874, 12.30 p.m.

"MY DEAR GRANVILLE,

"Your note enclosing Mr. Gladstone's note has just reached me by post, and, as you see, the debate was last evening.

"I ought, however, to say that, while Playfair was speaking, and when it was known by him and others that I was intending to support him, Goschen came and told me of Mr. Gladstone's letter to you, and somewhat strenuously asked me to be silent. I replied that I could not then alter my course, and that I felt confident that, if I had the opportunity of explaining to Mr. Gladstone my position, both as regarded the pending debate, and the present phases of the education question, he would not press me to do so.

"You say that you thought I had been much dissatisfied with the meeting held at your house before the debate on the 25th clause, and that my dissatisfaction appeared to extend to yourself.

"Pray do not think any such thing. I never was dissatisfied with you, and never expect to be; and as to that particular meeting, I thought that, like yourself, you showed real consideration for my position.

"As regards the meeting and the division and debate last Wednesday, I do not feel that I ought on personal grounds to object to my late colleagues changing their votes; but I thought, and still think, that so sudden and marked a change, as twelve members of the late Government voting against a clause which that Government maintained up to the end of last session, was not an advantageous step for the party, and I think the division list supports this view.

"That, however, is my own opinion on a matter in which others are as likely to be right as myself; but I must add that I think what happened on Wednesday prevents the public from supposing my late colleagues to be responsible for what I say or do in education matters, and also makes the public expect that in these matters I should not conceal my convictions.

"You see, I have had to bear the brunt of this education battle. Without doubt Mr. Gladstone and my colleagues were most considerate to me during the fight, and it is quite true that Mr. Gladstone made most generous concessions to Ripon and myself; but then it must not be forgotten that in all probability the Government would have been beaten, and badly beaten, if the battle had been fought on different grounds.

"Mr. Gladstone always fully acknowledged this as regarded his concessions to what was the opinion of our Cabinet with regard to the 25th clause; and both the dissolution and Wednesday's division have proved that the Cabinet was right.

"Well, this fight brought me into collision with many members of that section of the party to which I was supposed to belong. Their opposition has been constant and bitter, and has resulted in a most determined effort to drive me out of Parliament. Now many of my late col-

leagues have gone over to my opponents upon that very question, which was the test question of my late election.

"I do not complain of this—of course they must do as they think right; but if they speak out on one part of the question, I think they must not complain at my speaking out on other parts; especially as it so happens that, whilst I differ from my old allies on the 25th clause and the religious bearings of the question, I agree with them on most of the purely educational questions, such, for instance, as this ministry of education, and the much more important matter of universal compulsion.

"Excuse my writing thus fully, but I wanted to explain to you and Mr. Gladstone why I do not think I am a 'dissolvent,' because I feel that under all the circumstances it is due to myself, and to the public, and to this education cause, which I have much at heart, that I should not feel myself prevented from speaking out on any branch of the education question, though making it clear, as I did last night, that I am speaking only for myself.

"Yours ever truly,

"W. E. FORSTER.

"Having heard of Mr. Gladstone's note, I did what I could to prevent a division.

"I have reason to believe that a large majority

of our side would have voted with Playfair—a much larger proportion than voted with Lowe against me on Wednesday."

A little later in the session (July 1), Mr. Dixon brought in a bill for making compulsory attendance general, and in favour of compulsory establishment of school boards. Forster spoke in support of compulsory attendance, but the bill was not allowed to proceed. The only other incident of importance in connection with public affairs during the spring and summer was his appearance at Sheffield, on the occasion of the laying of the foundation-stones of the new board schools, when he received such a welcome as was due to the author of the Education Act.

Naturally his attendance on his Parliamentary duties, now that he was out of office, though steady, was not so constant as it had been in previous years. He was once more permitted to indulge in some of those pleasures in which, from his youth upwards, he had delighted; and he was now the possessor of a property in the Lake District, which enabled him to enjoy thoroughly some of the most beautiful scenery in Europe. Early in 1873 he had purchased the little property of Fox Ghyll, Ambleside, a picturesque cottage which nestles at the foot of a richly wooded hill between Grasmere and Windermere, and which for Forster had the additional attraction of being

close to Fox How, the residence of his mother-in-law, Mrs. Arnold. From the time when he became the owner of Fox Ghyll, it was almost the greatest pleasure of his life to spend a few days or weeks there, in the fine air of the hills, and in the midst of scenery which had a special attraction for him. His release from the cares of office enabled him to enjoy this pleasure largely in the spring and summer of 1874. Fox Ghyll became his holiday home, and many of the brightest and happiest hours of his life were those which he spent there, with his wife and children—himself full of a childlike delight in all his surroundings, and as eager in his pedestrianism and hill-climbing as he had ever been in his early days of mountaineering in Switzerland.

This happy nook, between lake and hill, became his place of refuge and recreation whenever the labours and anxieties of public life weighed too heavily upon him. It was not solitude, however, which he sought at Fox Ghyll. Throughout his life he had delighted in the society of those dear to him, and in his country home it was his chief pleasure to share with his family the enjoyment of the beautiful scenery which lay within easy reach of his door. No other spot on earth could ever replace Wharfeside, the home of his manhood and married life, and the scene of his first great struggles and successes, in his affections; yet, from 1873 onwards, it was to Fox Ghyll that

he naturally turned for relief and sunshine, and the mountains and lakes of Westmoreland became almost as dear to him as the familiar hills of Yorkshire and the busy valleys around Bradford.

One important result of his release from the chains of office was that, in the autumn of 1874, he was enabled to carry out a long-cherished project and to visit America, a land which had long possessed the deepest interest for him, and which had been made doubly dear to him by the fact that it held his father's grave. That he had many friends in the United States need hardly be said. Not a few of the leading Americans of their time—Emerson, Adams, Sumner, and others—were his personal acquaintances, and had enjoyed his hospitality in England. But beyond these he had countless friends whom he had never seen in the flesh, and the names of many of whom were absolutely unknown to him. These might be roughly divided into two classes. There were, first, the American Quakers and abolitionists, who admired him for his father's sake and for his own unceasing efforts in the cause of the slave; and, next, the politicians of the North, who knew that in Forster the Union had found one of its most staunch and powerful supporters in its hour of trial.

The visit, which, as usual when travelling, he described in a series of letters to his wife, was a great success. He had as his companion his cousin, Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, grandson of

the first baronet. They left Liverpool for Quebec by the *Circassian*, September 10th. "The instant I got on the wharf at Quebec," he writes, "while waiting for my luggage, I had a letter given me from the manager of the Cooper Institute at New York, taking it for granted that I was intending a lecturing tour in the States, and would begin with New York, and offering his services to work the whole affair up if I would put myself in his hands, and also the net receipts, up to two hundred dollars. . . . A telegram also from Dufferin, asking me to go to Government House when at Ottawa."

After receiving much hospitality and attention at Quebec, the travellers went on to Montreal, where another round of sight-seeing and kindly festivity awaited them. Naturally he was much interested in the schools. "At the schools I visited to-day only the head and perhaps the second teacher men; the rest young women, most of them good-looking. The schools large—one 650, another 400. Religious teaching everywhere, but no catechism in the Protestant schools, and no attempt to separate one Protestant sect from another, either as regards children or teachers. No conscience clause for the Catholic schools; so, in villages where the Protestants are not numerous enough to get up a school for themselves, the children must, Dr. J—— tells me, have Roman Catholic religious teaching, and the

parents are therefore the more inclined to go westward, away from the priests. The schools mainly supported by rates, but the Protestant and Catholic ratepayers can and do mark their rates, so that they go respectively to Protestant and Catholic schools—a vile practice which no one defends, but declared to be a necessity." Whilst at Montreal he was entertained at dinner, and was troubled at meeting some influential men who talked of separation from the mother-country, and either independence or annexation to the United States. "The dinner was long; a health to the Queen and Governor-General, and then my health. My reply was difficult—in one respect more difficult than if reporters had been present, because it was hard to draw the line between after-dinner talk and serious speech. But I managed, I think, to convey to them my earnest desire to keep up a union with them, and also my desire that they should foster a national feeling as no cause of disunion, but rather as the only possible condition of union in the future relation of equality to which I looked forward; bringing it in by alluding to the work the influential men before me had to do —reconcilement of two races with different religions, of Federal power with State rights, their success in both tasks making me hope that they would reconcile their growth with continuance of the English connection. It was well received, I think not merely from compliment to their guest."

At Ottawa they were received with great kindness by Lord Dufferin, the Governor-General, and under his guidance they "did" the lions of the place. He had not a little talk with Lord Dufferin on the future of Canada in its relation to the empire, and was specially pleased to find that the "very strong words" which he had spoken on that subject had been "a real help" to the Governor-General, who had been somewhat discouraged by the tone of one or two prominent public men in England, who seemed not only willing but positively wishful to let Canada go. In a pleasant, leisurely way, Forster and his companion passed through Canadian territory, enjoying the sights which they witnessed, both those which were novel and those which reminded them of home, and everywhere being received with marks of attention and respect. On several occasions Bradford men in trouble found their way to him, and he had to listen to their story, and give them the assistance for which they asked. He heard much, too, of the inconsiderate dealings of the Colonial Office with Canada in bygone days, and lost no opportunity of preaching increasing union between the mother-country and her children on the Federal basis. At last, in the early part of October, New York was reached, and here, as might have been expected, Forster found himself among friends. "Tell it not to the profane," he writes, "but I must confess to a frequent instinctive

surprise that our kinsmen reply to us in English. They are so strange-looking and yet so like as well as unlike us. The exceeding quickness of thought and the promptness of action contrast curiously with the deliberate slowness of speech. I think this contrast is the strongest first impression. At the little station at Garrisons, to my great delight, the station-master had his legs on the table, and no questions from me could get them off. The streets and houses in New York are grand enough. Buxton and I went to the play, a drama by Mark Twain, 'The Gilded Age,' chiefly a skit on land speculations and Congress life, sensational enough, but the tone healthy and entirely un-French. Cyrus Field very early found us out, and the day was chiefly spent in calls, leaving letters, and the like. In the evening, the *Tribune* reporter interviewed me, but I courteously told him nothing. I have been again asked to lecture, and my refusal seems somewhat to astonish.

"Yesterday (Friday) was a clear, bright day, with hot sun, ending in a beautiful but cool evening. Mr. Neilson, the President of the Board of Education Commission, called with old Mr. Cooper, a very generous millionaire, eighty-four years old, active and shrewd, the founder of the Cooper's Institute, who told me his mother could remember a *cheval de frise* across New York to keep off the Indians. I was taken to two large schools—boys in 23rd Street and girls

in 20th Street. The teaching is absolutely free, and all classes attend. I was told many of the parents were moneyed folk, and clearly some of the children, by dress and look, were of the poorest; no coloured children. The plan was to gather them all together and make me make speeches. I was glad to see the mistresses disliked this, and wished me to see the classes thoroughly, which I mean doing. I did, however, try with a newspaper the children of eleven in the primary school (the age they generally leave), and found they all, both boys and girls, could read. They were dismissed in classes by music—the girls with a dancing trip. Oh dear! the gestures and intonations with which a young minx of eleven or twelve recited in the midst of the big room was a sight to be remembered. The Bible is read at the beginning of the first lesson, but without note or comment. A compulsory law is to come in force next January.

"*Sunday evening, October 11th*, 1874. . . . We had a curious experience yesterday.

"If there be a political party upon which I have looked with abhorrence, it is the old Democratic party of New York, that union of the rich merchants with the rough Irish which was the great support of the slave power. Well, there is a caucus which ruled that party, and there was, and is, a society or club which ruled the caucus—the Tammany Society owning the Tammany

Hall, the very temple of corruption in former days, somewhat cleansed nowadays, but still the centre from which the wires are pulled.

"Well, Abraham Hewitt, a large iron-master and a very good fellow, turns out to be a leading Democrat, and he took us yesterday to the great caucus New York meeting of the year, in Tammany Hall, at which the Democrats nominated their candidates for mayor, aldermen, etc. A large room, with some six hundred well-dressed men, but many of them rough enough, and most of them smoking; a sprinkling of gentlemen, *really* using influence, but most careful not to appear to do so. The chairman tried hard to get us on the platform, but I resolutely refused; and everybody was most courteous to us, allowing us to go down into the committee-room, where the disputed elections of delegates were debated and decided in secret conclave. A large proportion of the delegates were Irish, and clearly enough the materials were most combustible. But in the full meeting there was only a sham difference of opinion, the wire-pullers having well rehearsed the performance. In fact, the party seemed almost hopelessly enslaved to them by the very completeness of their organization. The speaking was generally clear, but one or two men were furious, especially one, Captain R——, an old Tammany 'war-horse,' much flattered by being told that the Englishman had heard of him—it was not added

with what character. The convention began about four and lasted till past seven, when Hewitt took us off to the Manhattan Club, where the aristocratic Democrats congregate; a handsome, large, well-furnished house, much better than the Union Club. They gave us there a most amusing dinner, good wine and cookery, and a very merry party. . . . I put them upon all their most tender subjects, and bore my testimony as to their past misdoings, but I was quite prepared to admit that there is much to be said for State rights against the central power, now that slavery is abolished. As to the state of the South, the two parties diametrically contradicted each other, but I think that we shall get at some truth between them."

Desiring to visit the West, and above all to see his father's grave at Friendsville before the severe weather set in, Forster did not stay long in New York. The statue of Lincoln was to be unveiled by President Grant at Springfield, and thither he made his way, *viâ* Chicago.

"Leland Hotel, Springfield, 6.30 a.m.,
"October 15th.

"Scene as follows:—good-sized room; large coal fire; check table in the middle, I sitting on it, a dozen legs by my side. Buxton curled up in the corner with his head in his rug, taking out his sleep; some eighteen or twenty citizens doing ditto on chairs or floor; a large pointer before the

fire, most comfortable of all. The town full to overflowing for the demonstrations. We had engaged rooms; but they consider they have kept their word by promising to fix us up after breakfast, when I shall make myself known to Vice-President Wilson. Grant is here, and so is Sherman. . . . Distance from Chicago, 185 miles. After writing to thee yesterday (from Chicago) we took a carriage and pair—'livery' they call it—and drove to their ugly sandy park, and saw the furthest limits of the fire, which swept away detached houses in the wood, not killing the trees. We called, I am glad to say, on the Rev. Robert Collyer, who, you know, came to see us; he is one of their best and most famous preachers, was son of a Blubberhouse blacksmith, worked at Blubberhouse mill, full of Wharfedale reminiscences, and delighted to see me. 'Your hair is grey,' I said. 'So is yours.' 'You look more worldly; you used to have a saint-like look.' A man in the hotel took pity on me as I was wandering about the corridors, and in showing me the way said, 'What are you doin' here? I suppose fixin' the clocks.' . . . Collyer's church, a detached suburban building, had just been finished at a cost of $200,000; half-burnt down, but rebuilt for another $70,000. His pay is $5,600, and New Yorkers offer him $10,000; but he is 'clear grit,' and, if he leaves Chicago at all, will not take an advance. He sent his best remembrances to you, and was very

pleasant. He had an ex-Thickside Quakeress with him, who knew all about my father. . . . Breakfast over! and, hurrah! we have rooms, so I am dressed, and, barring my wide-awake, fit for the best of them—frock-coat and white waistcoat. I send an extract from the Springfield paper, mentioning 'the Right Hon. Forrester,' and giving a grand poem, which was recited yesterday by a general."

"Rock Island, Harper's Hotel, October 17th.

"Our day at Springfield was very interesting, but also very tiring. After posting my letter we sallied off to try to find V. P. Wilson, who, you know, is an old U.S. senator of Massachusetts, and who once dined with us. We discovered him at Mr. C——'s. Wilson at once, in the kindest manner, took charge of us, and took us off in a carriage to the Executive Mansion, where Governor Beveridge was entertaining the President and party. Grant was at breakfast, but soon came in for introduction. It appeared he did not identify me till the afternoon, when I had given him Schenck's letter, but he was civil and more willing to talk than I had expected. . . . There were divers women, governors, and senators, to whom I was presented. All the men who had had to do with their foreign politics, such as Judd, an old friend and supporter of Lincoln's, and his minister at Berlin, knew me, and were most kind;

but I was an utter puzzle to most—a thin, black-eyed, much-haired, unclerical-looking individual, who had been Grant's first chaplain, hoping I was John Forster, Dickens's biographer, and proportionately disappointed. Buxton's 'Sir' is a grievous stumbling-block. I believe it is considered a name. He is generally called Mr. Buxton. General Sherman puzzled over his card, and said, 'Sir? What is it? Rev. Fowell Buxton?' The papers have him 'Secretary T. Fowler Buxton;' and after I had carefully spelt out our names, the hotel clerk here wrote out a pass card for the arsenal, 'Sir Forrester and T. Buxton.' But to return to our demonstration. . . . The crowd was large, very large for a town of twenty thousand people, and it was interesting to see the well-to-do farmers flocking in from what is, it is said, the richest farming country in the States. The procession was a fearfully long affair, and we went miles round in order to pass Lincoln's house, an unpretending wooden building, detached, but in a street. At last we reached the cemetery, a wood, in which was the obelisk, and in front of it a veiled statue and a pedestal large enough for a well-filled platform. Here I was introduced to several West Point generals, Macdowell and Pope, who commanded large armies in the war, and was at once recognized by Sherman. There were ten to fifteen thousand of crowd in front, and their patience was marvellous. The 'exercises' lasted

for hours. There was a laudable endeavour to bring in all elements. The prayer was by the Bishop of the Methodist African Episcopal Church from Baltimore, a full-blooded negro; a company of negro volunteers in Zouave uniform in a place of honour; and I must say the negro prayer and the negro clothes excelled in taste on the whole. The statue was unveiled by the mother and a sister of some convent which had sent nurses to the war, and I think it gave pleasure to have two Britishers assisting. . . . Grant's speech, though read, was poor, incoherent, and unmeaning, but I think his bad speaking is one of his good points, and no wonder in this much-belectured country. . . . Nevertheless the occasion was one of the greatest interest, realizing, as it did, Lincoln's wonderful career; his rise from the lowest step of the ladder, hardly able to read; his rare integrity and political honesty which made the people believe in him; his genial humorous sympathy, which made his neighbours love him, and the width and depth of his judgment, which made all the generals and politicians around me confess that his murder took from the country its best pilot. There was a weather-beaten countryman on the platform, who had been his friend in early life, a little his senior, with whom I shook hands, who made me understand the circumstances of his early life."

After the ceremony there was a reception, with

tea, at which the President shook hands with all who presented themselves, and then, at 10.30, a banquet at which speeches were made until past two in the morning, one of the toasts being Mr. Forster's health. His experience on this occasion led him to entertain a great respect both for the patience and the powers of physical endurance of the American people. One further extract from his letter relating to the Springfield ceremony must be given, as it casts a characteristic light upon a virtue which he always held in the highest admiration: "I took refuge in General Sherman's room, where collected Generals Pope and MacDowell, and other officers. One or two of them were picking holes in Lincoln—his coarse stories and cunning appointments,—but all this did not come to much, explicable by his passion for humour. Against them this story by Judd: When he was in one of his hardest fights with Douglas, who was a strong pro-slavery man, Judd looked over the notes of one of his speeches, and said this would not do for their audience, not anti-slavery enough, in expression rather than substance. Lincoln's reply was, 'This is all I feel, and I would rather lose the election than mislead the people even by an adjective.'"

They went on from Springfield to Colorado, the novel scenery and the life of the West interesting Forster immensely. He took the opportunity of seeing something of the miners and their ways,

and seems on the whole to have been favourably impressed by them. After spending some time among the mountains, they turned south to St. Louis, being fortunate in having the society of Professor Hayden, the head of the United States Surveying Department, for a portion of the journey. At St. Louis, a chief part of his business was to inquire after the welfare of some young men, the sons of villagers at Burley, who were anxious for tidings of them. Forster made it his first task to look up these wandering Yorkshiremen, and sent messages of a reassuring kind to their mothers in far-away Wharfedale. At St. Louis they once more encountered General Sherman, who gave them letters of introduction to leading people in New Orleans, to which city they next proceeded.

"New Orleans, November 2nd, 1874.

"We are now in the heart of the South, and we have had the luck to 'assist' at a most curious and critical election. Only think of my seeing to-day two long *queues* of negro voters crowding up to the poll to vote for coloured men, to keep up the coloured Government over their proud Creoles, with negro police officers guarding the poll, and twenty companies of the United States army in the city and State, and five ships of war in the river, ready to aid them; three companies stationed in the Court House. On

leaving St. Louis, General Sherman said, 'You will want no letters; you are as well known in America as in England.' I must say I doubt this in the North, except with men conversant with affairs; but I suspect my 'record' has been well remembered in the South, hate being stronger than love. There was a tall, fine-looking woman in the car—about thirty, I should think—going to New Orleans to collect her rents, before going on to San Francisco to join her father and mother. We had much talk on social condition, effects of the war, etc. She said she was coming to Europe next year, so I told her I would get her into the House, and gave her my card. 'Oh,' she said, 'I know your name! Often have I wished you bound. You did us great injury during the war.' However, we talked on, and she said she was reminded of a young lady saying to her friend *à propos* of some undesirable young men, 'After all, they are human beings.' But I have a message from her to Lord Salisbury which *is* delightful. I quoted his saying about the natural allies, and said, 'You know he was your friend.' 'Oh yes,' she said, 'I know it, the dear old gentleman. I wish I could give him a smack (kiss) right between his eyes. Tell him so—that there is one American lady at least who will do that for him if he comes over. . . . Well, it is curious meeting you. How I have cursed you!' We parted, however, the best of friends."

Having witnessed the election, and studied with interest the local political conditions, the travellers made their way to that spot in Tennessee where the elder Forster had died more than twenty years before.

"Samuel Low's Ferry House, Holston River, Tennessee,
"Saturday Evening, November 7th, 1874.

"Here I am, in the very house in which my father died, untouched since his death, with the host and hostess who attended him, 'remembering everything as if it was yesterday,' and such striking, pleasant people! He, a tall, thin, upright, dark-eyed, lantern-jawed man, but with a kindly face, and a sweet voice and courteous, dignified manners, and his wife like a sunburnt saleswoman. But I must tell you how we came here. We left Chattanooga at 5.30 this morning, 112 miles, slow train, to Knoxville, passing through Athens, which Yardley Warner had told me was his head-quarters in his visits to his schools, and to which I had telegraphed. I therefore looked out, and true enough my man entered the car. We quickly found one another out, and arranged our places, and were off from Knoxville with a carriage and pair a little after one, having in the meantime got hold, to my great comfort, of thy letters, and snatched a quiet dinner. . . . At last we reached General Low's (he is called General by way of affectionate respect: I find before the war he did command the militia volunteer gathering),

a lone cottage, or rather farm, on the brow of the hill, but so deep in forest that we cannot see the river from the windows, though it is close to us. The autumn mist is over the hills and trees; there is no wind, no sound but the wood-crickets if we listen for them; sometimes the bells of the cattle; perhaps a slow melodious chant—I suppose a negro in the distance. The day has been hot, but is now one of our warmest autumn evenings; but the air dry, as we never have it. The leaves are mostly gone; but what are left are the richest tints, especially the red oaks. I never was in a place so completely and beautifully quiet. There is a religious gathering of the Cumberland Presbyterians at a school-house, two miles or so off. Two young women went off from the house on one good horse, just after we arrived; and now our host is gone, and I am writing in a low snug room, by the light of a tallow candle and the embers of a large fire of hickory logs. When we drove up, just before dusk, our host was standing in his verandah. 'Mr. Low,' I said, 'my name is Forster. My father died here twenty years ago. Do you remember him?' 'I should think I did. Oh yes.' And he received us as old friends. 'You are like him,' he said, 'but taller, a little.' He remembers everything—said almost at once, pointing to a chair, 'I had that made for your father. He asked me to do so, but he never got into it.' He said he was ailing the evening he

came, but very anxious to get on to Lost Creek, a small Friends' settlement about twenty-five miles off, and started the next morning, but was taken ill in a field close by, and had to be brought back."

"Riley Lee's House, Friendsville,
"Monday Morning, November 9th.

"To return to General Low. Our bed-room was our sitting-room—one large bed; but I think we concealed the fact that one of us slept on a couch. I wished to do so; but Fowell would not let me. This was the room in which were Uncle Josiah and John Chandler. My father and William Holmes were in the next room—W. H. in the large bed, and my father in a truckle bed, which our hostess drew from under the bed, and which he preferred, having it put near the fire. There was great snugness about the house, and homely comfort in the ways of the host and hostess and their sons. . . . The house was not an inn, though travellers were sometimes entertained. I asked Warner to give Low $10 as payment for ourselves and horses, but his eyes glistened, and he said, 'Oh no; I could not think of taking anything from William Forster's son.' . . . Clearly my father had left the most true and vivid impression of his loving nature and Christian conduct, and next to that impression was the remembrance of William Holmes's constant devoted waiting on him. His eldest son, who well remembered my father, had

tears in his eyes when we parted from him. . . . It was only eight miles to Friendsville by the right road, but that was impossible to find—no sign-posts, no marked features in the hills, many roads or rather trails, and the dead leaves hiding the track in the forest more completely than snow. After getting wrong twice, we captured a boy, and arrived at the meeting-house about a quarter of an hour after they had sat down. It was a curious scene. How I wish Flo could have drawn the white painted wooden building in the forest, with the riding horses hitched to the trees, and the handsome black and white pigs rooting about, and the fenced-off graveyard just beyond, and the small Friendsville cottages scattered about, all white, and almost every one with its verandah. There were about one hundred and fifty persons at the meeting. . . . We dined at the William Forster Home for daughters of Friends to learn housekeeping and go to the Friends' school close by. At eight o'clock there was a Bible-reading at the school, which turned out to be a discussion on war, the schoolmaster, William Russell, arranging texts which were read by one person after another, and upon which he commented and invited comment. War, of course, got the worst of it, and there was an entire omission of any reference to their own war; so I tried to improve the occasion by exhorting them all to good treatment of the negro, as the way to avoid war for the future; not that

these friends need exhortation, for they have done their duty under most difficult circumstances. You will imagine from what I have said that the situation of the graveyard is very beautiful. . . .

"This morning, friends gathered about me: An old man who remembered my father's first visit in 1823 or 1824, when he was a tall spare man, with his hair cut short, who used to bathe every morning. There was an old man, John Mackay, I went to see, very ill in bed, with his old sick wife by his side; 'Often I feel as though I could see the prints of his knees in that chair: I was a young man, a very ignorant man, but it seemed as though our hearts were drawn together.' . . . It is curious how I have found almost every possible trace of my father very much by reason of the want of go-aheadness of the people. Low, for instance, had been born and raised in his house, his father, Abraham Low, being one of the first settlers, coming when it was an Indian country. Yesterday afternoon Yardley Warner discovered for me the negro who had been the waiting slave whilst he was ill, the decent middle-aged mother of seven children, four of whom now lived with her. Her story was an insight into the old system. She and her three children came with Mr. Low. She was called Maria Low, as was usual, after her master; married to a slave by name Henderson, not in church, but by the Squire. After emancipation, slaves usually had to marry again, but her husband

married another woman and left her. Her eldest son was sold off, and disappeared just before the Yankees came down. However, now I should think she was doing fairly well, so I only gave her five dollars, and have asked Yardley Warner to look after her. Our meeting at the Normal Black School was very interesting. A hundred and fifty or so darkies—students, children, and parents. We were made to speak. I made rather a nice little speech about their changed state, the duties of patience, industry, and the like; and Fowell made a much nicer; and two of them, one the editor of the weekly paper, made pleasant replies. Almost every one of them had been either born a slave or since emancipation, and by far the largest number were ex-slaves, and many of them very black."

A day or two later he met a Colonel Dickenson, Member for Congress and Chairman of the Congress Finance Committee. He was the first statesman who had broached the Canada question to him.

"'Well, what do you think of the Canada problem?'—in slow drawl, to which I with equal slowness—

"'I do not know that Canada is a problem. Canada gives us no trouble; her people are well off and contented.'

"'But what good does she do you?'

"'Well, I do not know of any special good to

any individual; but we do not look at it in that light. We consider Canada part of our country.'

"'Ah, yes. You, like us, are a land-loving people.'

"'No, we do not care about the land; it is the people. We consider the Canadians our fellow-countrymen. While they stick to us we shall stick to them; but if they wish to leave us we shall not restrain them,' etc., etc."

Forster concludes the notes of his visit to the scene of his father's death, a visit which evidently made a very deep impression upon him, as follows:—

"I have now seen James Rodgers, the doctor who was with my father at his death—a kindly man. He said he thought ill of the case from the first; the illness pneumonia, mainly owing to the changes of temperature. 'He never saw a man die more triumphantly.' He passed away without pain, conscious to the last. I am rather in a conflict talking to these old Confederates. I cannot help telling them what I think of slavery, and yet I cannot bear to triumph over them. I arrange my talk by telling them I must think their cause a bad one, but I admire their heroism and endurance, and we generally part the best of friends."

After spending a few days in Richmond and Baltimore, where he carefully inspected the schools, he went straight through to Boston by

way of New York. At Boston he was the guest of Mr. Adams.

"Very kind and hospitable they are; and Adams takes me behind the scenes of American politics more than any other man either can or would; but I am very glad we went West and South before remaining in the Eastern States. We have with difficulty staved off a reception here. I am in for, I fear, one or two speeches at Philadelphia; and on Saturday evening I had a telegram from Morton, one of the most influential merchants in New York, saying, 'Would it be agreeable to you to attend a reception, if given by the Union League Club in recognition of your distinguished service and friendship for the Government during the war?' Of course I must make it agreeable; and I cannot say I regret the request, but it sits heavy on me, as I long to be at Wharfeside. Adams is slow and sedate as of old; but he is as fresh and clear and vigorous as ever. I hear rumours of Massachusetts sending him as a senator, and I do not lose hope of his being President, but I fear his manner is too cold."

In Boston, as in other places, the schools were the great attraction for Forster, and he took special notice of the religious teaching given in them, finding, however, that in America, as in England, the teachers have at times to contend with unreasoning bigotry.

At Philadelphia he met his old correspondent

and friend Ellis Yarnall, and was introduced to most of the celebrities of the place, as usual taking the opportunity of visiting the schools. Then came a number of visits to Washington, where he visited the Senate, and heard the President's message read, or rather fell asleep during the reading, which was almost inaudible.

"Both chambers are of the same pattern, long rooms, with semicircles of chairs in front of the Speaker or Vice-President, and galleries all round. House, of course, much larger than Senate; the floor accessible to strangers behind the chairs; and in the House strangers may sit in the outside chairs when the galleries are full. They must have effect upon the speakers; and, indeed, I have heard this fact much commented on and lamented. Fish gave us last evening a good dinner in handsome house. I took in his wife. No other lady. The party—Blaine, the Speaker; Jewell, the Postmaster-General; Bristow, the Secretary of the Treasury; Boutwell, his predecessor; Bierstadt, etc. We had amusing talk on the different ministerial systems, parliamentary forms, etc., Gladstone's pamphlet, progress of the Papists, Government of the South, and so on. Here are two facts. There are more than fifty Confederate officers, some of them generals, in the two Houses, and no Catholic senator; and only one or two members of the House. Proofs of real union of the sections and of the no-popery feeling."

He called on Mr. Stephens, the Vice-President of the Confederates.

"A man of genius, as I expected; worn to skin and bone, weighing about eighty pounds, with crutches, but a pale, clear-cut face, with flashing eyes and pleasant expression. He tried to explain away his corner-stone speech. Said he was quoting from some of the chief justices; that their slavery was misunderstood, was not slavery; gave full protection to life and liberty to the slaves, and other such nonsense. There was no use contradicting the old man, so I only shrugged my shoulders and interjected dissent. We turned him on the oratory of Congress, and he gave us a vivid and most striking description of Clay, Calhoun, and Webster, and also Chouts, who he said was a great orator, but not a statesman; his definition of that individual being 'a man who thinks originally on politics.'"

At Mr. Bancroft's he again met President Grant, with whom he fraternized delightfully. "The Anglo-Saxon language, I had said, would soon be the language of the world. 'We and England, indeed, would be the world.' In fact, I could not have talked more Anglo American alliance than he did. Canada turned up, and there was enough hint of annexation for me to say, 'If Canada chooses one day to leave us, and the next day to join you, we shall not object; but she seems to like to stop with us; in fact,

the lesson you taught us a hundred years ago has made us so treat our colonies that it will be very difficult for them to leave us, and we shall stick to them till they wish to do so.'

"'I should think very ill of you if you did not,' was his reply. There was a good-natured frankness about Grant, and an uncultured sense which I liked, and it was curious watching his remarkable lids and red eyes. We talked against slavery, and he evidently thought it honest to say he had slaves when the war broke out."

Before he left Washington he dined both with the Vice-President and the President, then went to New York in order to take ship for home. The reception given in his honour at the Union League Club was a striking event. There was a large attendance, including a number of leading citizens, and the president of the club, Mr. Joseph Choate, made a speech warmly eulogizing Forster's attitude towards the United States during the civil war, and the great part he had played in the establishment of a national system of education in England. Mr. Forster replied at considerable length, the burden of his speech being that upon which, alike in dark days and in bright, he had never been tired of dwelling—the unity in interests and in sympathies of the two great branches of the English people.

"This Union League Club," he said, in conclusion, "was formed, I am told, in dark hours of

danger, to join together loyal Americans in support of your close union against the slave power. May it be the type and forerunner of another union league—of a close alliance between the United States and England and all English-speaking communities; of a friendship between our Governments, so that we together may influence the world by proving how great are the blessings of popular Government when individual self-control prevails among the people; for, depend upon it, neither you nor we would be able to promote liberty or protect the liberties of others, or even preserve our own liberties, if either of us allowed this individual self-control to fade from among us."

In his journal he says—

"I got through my meeting somehow on the Monday. The attendance was large. Almost all the New York notables; the best representative assembly that had been brought together for long. . . . . I felt them to be a kind but also critical audience. They received me well and were kind throughout, but I was uncommon glad when I got through having said about what I intended, though not even at *my* best. But I never had a more difficult job. I brought out what I wished about the Colonies, which they took very well. After the speech I was put into the middle of a room, and I had to shake hands with some hundreds of folk, every man being presented to me as though I were a president or general. Then supper in a

large room below, and a few short speeches, and at last I got home to bed."

One day only remained for him on the American continent, and it was devoted almost entirely to the inspection of New York female schools. "I brought away one curious fact. Every girl has to learn French or German. The principal told me that before Sedan seven-eighths learned French, now seven-eighths learn German."

Sailing in the *Abyssinia*, he landed at Liverpool on December 26th, and, returning at once to Burley, was delighted to find all well at home.

CHAPTER III.

THE LEADERSHIP OF THE LIBERAL PARTY—THE EASTERN QUESTION.

Scarcely had Mr. Forster returned from America than he was involved in a controversy which was certainly not of his own provoking. In the middle of January, 1875, Mr. Gladstone, to the surprise of his friends, announced his determination to retire from the leadership of his party. The efforts privately made to induce him to reconsider his determination proved ineffectual, and it became clear that it would be necessary to fill his place as leader of the Opposition in the House of Commons and titular head of the Liberal party. By common consent Mr. Forster was named as one of the men best qualified to fill this great post, which at the time was generally regarded as the stepping-stone to the premiership. Various politicians of eminence were named as rival claimants to the honour, but before long the contest—not between the principals, but among their supporters in the country—resolved itself into one between the claims of Mr. Forster on the one hand, and those of Lord Hartington on

the other. It would be an invidious task for a biographer to discuss the merits of the two candidates for such a post. Nor is it necessary now to do so. One thing, however, must be said. There would have been no question as to Mr. Forster's pre-eminent fitness for the leadership if it had not been for the unhappy differences with the Birmingham League on the education question. Even those who supported the candidature of Lord Hartington did so rather on the ground that his was the name which would divide the party least than on the plea that he had any positive claims to the position surpassing or equalling those of Mr. Forster.

The friends of both men pressed their claims stoutly, both in the press and in public, the weight of opinion being at the outset unquestionably in favour of Mr. Forster. There is no doubt that he was gratified and touched by the enthusiasm with which he was supported in many different quarters. His ambition seemed to be on the point of being satisfied to the utmost; and it was impossible for a man of his warm temperament and vigorous individuality not to feel that there was now opened up to him a possibility of future usefulness and distinction, the realization of which any man, however able, might have coveted. Neither he nor Lord Hartington took any personal part in the controversy, both waiting with patience for the decision of the Liberal members of the House of

Commons, with whom the choice lay. But if Forster's friends were enthusiastic in their support, his enemies were even more ardent in their hatred. The action of his old colleagues in the previous year, when they "threw him over" on the question of the 25th clause, had confirmed the League party in the entirely erroneous belief that Forster alone was responsible for the character of the Education Act, so far as the religious question was concerned. Ignoring the fact that upon all purely educational questions he was in much closer sympathy with them than almost any other member of the Government, they determined to take this opportunity of driving home the weapons with which they had assailed him in previous years, and of completing, so far as lay within their power, the ostracism to which they had doomed him. It is not pleasant to have to dwell, however briefly, upon the character of the attacks which, during the latter half of January, 1875, were made upon Forster. Perhaps the action which he felt most severely, and which was most generally condemned by fair-minded persons throughout the country, was that of the Radical section in his own constituency. The League party in Bradford was still smarting under the heavy defeat they had encountered in 1874, when they had combined for the purpose of excluding Forster from Parliament. They now summoned a meeting of their own friends and sympathizers, and, in the name of

Bradford Liberalism, passed a resolution hostile to Mr. Forster's claim to the leadership. It was his reward for having carried the Education Act.

I have spoken of his natural ambition, and of the not less natural pleasure with which he witnessed the recognition of his great qualities as statesman and administrator, on the part of those who were best qualified to form a judgment on the point. But when he saw that, although success might be within his reach, he could only attain it at the cost of weakening the party to which he belonged, by driving his irreconcilable opponents into open antagonism to it, he did not hesitate as to the course he would take. He saw his old friend, Lord Granville, with whom his relations were always specially cordial, and informed him of his determination not to allow his name to remain before the Liberal party in opposition to that of Lord Hartington. "I came away," he says in his diary, speaking of the interview, "with the leadership given up—not without a pang, but with full belief I had done the right thing." He subsequently wrote a letter to Mr. Adam, the Liberal whip, formally withdrawing from the contest. This step on his part must speak more eloquently than any words in reply to those who, during his lifetime, ventured to charge him with indifference to anything but his own interests in political affairs. It may be added that it was not merely by withdrawing his name from the competition

that he showed his loyalty to his party and his principles. Lord Hartington was duly elected, no other name being proposed, as leader of the Opposition in the House of Commons. He held that post from February, 1875, until the end of the session of 1879, and during that period there was no man who was more conspicuously loyal and cordial in his support of his leadership than Mr. Forster was. When leaving the House of Commons for his usual continental tour, at the close of the session of 1875, he was thanked with special cordiality by Lord Hartington for the support which he had given the latter in his difficult task.

It happened that during the year colonial questions were forced to the front. South African affairs were beginning to cause anxiety, and those who believed that one essential feature of the Liberal programme ought to be the abandonment of our colonial empire to its fate, were raising their voices in various quarters. Forster's feeling with regard to our responsibility in respect of our colonies was probably stronger than that of any other public man of his time, and for this reason—that it had a double foundation. It was based, in the first place, upon that deep sympathy with the subject races of the world, which he had inherited from his father and his uncle, and which, as has already been said, was really the master-feeling in his heart all through his life. "—— has never

fully believed the negro to be a man and a brother," he wrote once to a friend, giving the statement as a sufficient reason for his not being able at all times to agree with the distinguished man of whom he spoke. Forster unquestionably *did* believe in the manhood and brotherhood, not merely of the negro, but of all the races that people our earth, whatever might be their state of dependence or degradation. Fully possessed with this conviction, he never could feel that there was anything to distinguish the oppression of a yellow man or a black man from that of a white man. He had learned in his early youth something of the cruelties to which the native races are too often subjected when they are brought in contact with civilized settlers, and, so far as he was concerned, he was determined that he would never sanction in any way any act of oppression of which a negro or a Chinaman might be the victim, whatever might be the reasons of high policy alleged in defence of such an act. It was this feeling which gave him his keen interest in the affairs of South Africa, and of those other British colonies where the colonists have to deal with more or less dependent races of natives. The blacks had no votes. They had no caucus at their command, and not even a powerful organ in the press; but whilst Forster lived there was one voice at least which was certain to be raised in their defence in Parliament, however formidable

might be the enemies against whom they had to contend.

The other foundation of his interest in the colonies was that feeling of imperialism—using the word in its best sense—which was so strong in him. He delighted in the thought of the greatness and the vastness of the British empire, and longed ardently for the moment when the widely scattered portions of that empire should be welded together in a bond so strong that no sudden or accidental shock would suffice to break it. The reader has seen how great an interest he took, during his journey in the United States, in the Canada question. He was constantly seeking to learn the views both of Canadians and Americans upon it, and was never tired of preaching the doctrine of the unity of the empire—a unity based, not upon military or naval force, nor even upon the material bonds of commerce, but upon the essential oneness of our race in whatever part of the world it may be found. Nothing made him more indignant than to listen to the light and cynical remarks of those who held that, after all, Great Britain and Ireland were quite enough of themselves to tax the governing capacity of our race, and that the sooner we "cut the painter" and let the Greater Britain drift from us the better it would be for Englishmen. Being invited, in the autumn of this year (1875), to deliver an address to the Philosophical Institution of Edin-

burgh, he chose "Our Colonial Empire" as his theme, and one or two passages from the lecture may be quoted here.

"I believe that our union with our colonies will not be severed, because I believe that we and they will more and more prize this union, and become convinced that it can only be preserved by looking forward to association on equal terms. In other words, I believe that our colonial empire will last, because, no longer striving to rule our colonies as dependencies when they become strong enough to be independent, we shall welcome them as our partners in a common and mighty empire. But, if this be all I have to say, why, I may be asked, come here at all? Who talks now of casting off the colonies? What more popular cry at present than the preservation of our colonial empire? Some twelve years ago, it is true, a voice from Oxford declared this empire to be an illusion for the future, a danger to the present; but Professor Goldwin Smith has gone to Canada, and his eloquent arguments for disruption have as little convinced the Canadians as ourselves. A most distinguished and successful Indian governor told us at Glasgow last year, that 'he was not one of those who believe in uniting the colonies to our country in a perpetual bond;' and he added that, so far as our great Canadian possessions were concerned, 'the sooner the connection was severed the better.' But Sir George Campbell had only just

returned from India, and it is no disrespect to him to suppose that he was at that time a better judge of Indian than of British or colonial feeling. Some logicians and philosophers, some energetic and thoughtful politicians, have been supposed to desire ultimate separation; but, if they hold these opinions, of late they have but little expressed them; and, indeed, the supposition is based rather upon inferences which others chose to attribute to them than upon actual expressions. Certainly, the late Government was not seldom attacked as an anti-colonial Administration, but this charge is but another evidence of imperial feeling. It was known that no charge against a Government could be more damaging; and therefore, considering the conditions of party warfare, it was not unnatural for those who differed from us, both on matters of general policy and on details of colonial policy, to declare that we were wishing to get rid of the colonies or to provoke them to leave us. If I had come here to defend the Government of which I happened to be a member, which, of course, is not my object, I think I could show that our colonial policy has done not a little to improve and strengthen our connection with the colonies; but, at any rate, I may be allowed to disown in the strongest terms any intention or desire on our part to break it up. . . .

"As to the practical question, Are there any means by which it is possible that these future

2428

commonwealths, when no longer dependent, can be united with us and with one another? I may hasten at once to try to answer this question; for if it can be answered, that argument will be also met which I have already mentioned—namely, that separation would stimulate the colonies to a greater progress, and would increase their self-reliance. Surely it cannot be denied that, if it be possible to replace dependence by association, each member of the federation would find in the common nationality at least as much scope for its aspirations, as much demand for the patriotism and the energy and the self-reliance of its citizens, as it would if trying to obtain a distinct nationality for itself. But is this federation possible? There are many, even of those who desire it, who think that it is not. . . .

"What kind of federation do you propose? My reply is, I am ready with no proposition. I believe any precise proposition would be premature, and for this reason, that as yet no change in relations is necessary. As Mr. Arthur Mills stated in the passage I have already quoted, 'The present principle of our colonial policy is to ripen these communities to the earliest possible maturity,' and when they have obtained this maturity it will be for us and for them to consider what, under the circumstances then existing, will be the best bond of union. All that is required now is to imbue them and ourselves with the desire that the union

should last, with the determination that the empire shall not be broken up; to replace the idea of eventual independence, which means disunion, by that of association on equal terms, which means union. If this be done, we need not fear that at the fitting time this last idea will realize itself."

Brief as the foregoing extracts are, they will give some idea of the state of Forster's mind at that time—when as yet there was no organized movement in favour of imperial federation, and when he stood practically alone among statesmen of the front rank in advocating it. Later on, as we shall see by-and-by, his mind had grown and his views were both more advanced and more clearly defined than they appeared to be at Edinburgh. But his speech to the Philosophical Institution, on November 5, 1875, is specially interesting, as it really may be said to mark the beginning of a movement which has since attained such great proportions and which bids fair to lead to such substantial results. During his visit to Edinburgh, in which he was accompanied by Mrs. Forster, he received the freedom of the city, and was invited to stand for the post of Lord Rector of Aberdeen University, to which he was elected a few days later by a large majority.

A question which was certain to interest him greatly, occupied the public mind at the beginning of the year 1876. This was the issue of the so-called slave circular by the Admiralty—a circular

which virtually gave up, in certain cases, the right of asylum for escaped slaves on board English men-of-war. It turned out in the end that a Liberal as well as a Tory minister had been concerned in issuing regulations to this effect; but the public, always readily moved by appeals to the traditional sympathies of Englishmen on questions affecting slavery, were loud in their denunciations of any step of a retrograde character which might be taken by the Government. Forster himself was full of indignation. It was resolved by the leaders of the Opposition to move a resolution on the subject as soon as possible after the meeting of Parliament, and Forster proposed that it should be one calling for the withdrawal of the obnoxious circular.

To his Wife.

"Reform Club, February 4th, 1876.

"My dearest,

"To-day's story is this; I contended with my papers as well as I could up to one, getting through long memoranda by Harcourt, Selborne, and James, and having a call from Adam. I then went to Hartington, and had talk with him and Whitbread. Whitbread will move the resolution, if he can agree with us on the form.

"Harcourt proposed a long resolution, too legal, and to the effect that we would not go into

slave ports unless they would let us give refuge to their slaves. This is open to the fatal objection that there is nothing Zanzibar, Madagascar, and other slave-trading powers would like better than to keep us out of their ports. My resolution, however, was open to the objection that to require the withdrawal of the circular was to censure the Government. I then suggested that Whitbread should move for copies of their two circulars and our Admiralty order—thereby showing no party feeling by hitting all round—and add a resolution that no fugitive slaves should be restored to slavery. H. and W. and Cardwell, who came in, agreed to this.

"We then went on to Granville's; all the old Cabinet present but Bright, Argyll, Selborne, and Childers. Gladstone there and active. . . . After much talk the agreement was a simple resolution that fugitive slaves once received should not be restored to slavery, leaving it to Granville and Hartington to allude to our order and ask for all papers, showing we are making no party attack.

"It turns out that Clarendon's second despatch is in the Slave Trade Blue books of 1871 or 1872—bad for Stansfeld and me, but worse for the Anti-Slavery Society, who, being established to criticize Blue books, never found this out. . . . Farewell, my dearest.

"Thine,

"W. E. F."

"Athenæum Club, Saturday.

"James called on me this morning, finding fault with our resolution, but giving some good reasons, in which Harcourt agreed. So I went on to Granville, who agreed to call another meeting on Monday with Selborne; and then went on to Hartington, where I found Harcourt and Adam. We harked back to my original proposition, improving the words, and putting the order alongside circular."

In the end the resolution was defeated by a majority of forty-five. "Slashing speech from Dizzy at the end—furious attack on me," notes Forster in his diary. There was no doubt that the Tory Prime Minister was very angry at the detection of what was rather a piece of maladroitness on the part of one of his colleagues than any serious offence against English ideas on the question of slavery.

The Imperial Titles Bill was another question which aroused fierce excitement at the time—an excitement which has scarcely been justified by the consequences of the measure, now that it has been passed. It would hardly be worth alluding to Forster's part in the debates upon it, but for one circumstance. Whilst he objected altogether to a departure from the old style, under which the English empire had been built up, he was particularly anxious that, if such an alteration were

made to suit the ideas of men of the Disraelian type, it should not affect India alone, but should embrace all the outlying portions of the empire; and he suggested to the representatives of the colonies that they should claim their inclusion in any new title which might be assumed by the Crown with the sanction of Parliament.

Of the other political questions of 1876 in which he took part there is little that need be said, except with reference to that great problem of European policy which was now reappearing above the surface in the East. There were debates in Parliament on the education question in which he naturally took part. In one of these debates he notes with satisfaction the handsome manner in which Mr. Bright had spoken of the Act of 1870 and of himself. The Vivisection Bill, too, engaged a good deal of his time and attention, and he congratulated himself in his diary upon having got the House to "put the frogs back" under the protection of the measure, the Home Secretary having agreed to exclude them. There is one extract which may be made from his diary, because it refers to an incident in the life of the House of Commons which at the time caused some excitement.

"*June 30th*, 1876.—Home Rule debate. Heard a very plausible opening speech by Butt. Smyth got up as a Repealer to oppose, and I went away, remembering him as dull. I heard, afterwards,

I had missed one of the best speeches ever made in the House; acknowledged to be such by Dizzy and Bright; very vexing. I should have liked to have heard what this House considers a good speech. Much was owing to the felicity of the occasion—a Repealer knocking over a Home Ruler. . . . I called on Gladstone at 11.30 to talk over Eastern affairs, and especially the amount of our obligation under the 1856 Treaties. . . . G. quoted with approval what he said was a statement by Lord P[almerston], that a guarantee did not give the guaranteed a right to demand help; only gave the guarantors a *casus belli* if they chose to use it."

The latter portion of the foregoing extract introduces us to the condition of affairs in foreign politics which prevailed in 1876. In that same month of June the English public had been shocked by the publication, in the *Daily News*, of some letters from the correspondent of that journal at Constantinople, describing the atrocious cruelties which had been inflicted upon the inhabitants of certain villages in Bulgaria and Roumelia by the Turkish troops—chiefly irregulars recruited in Asia Minor—on the pretext of putting down a suspected insurrectionary movement. Lady Strangford, as soon as the *Daily News* account appeared, wrote to Mr. Forster confirming the statement. He went to see her, and found her "in much quandary, between her love of the Bulgarians, of whom she says she is the only friend, and her

love of the Turks. I told her she ought to send the facts to Dizzy, and she said she would."

This was on June 25th. On the following day English feeling on the subject first found voice in the House of Commons in a question which Forster addressed to Mr. Disraeli, regarding the truth of the newspaper reports. The Prime Minister gave him in reply "as near a denial as he dared." The session closed, leaving the public in a state of great uncertainty and excitement regarding the actual state of things in the East. It had been known for some time that great events were brewing there, and that Russia was about to make another step forward in her advance towards Constantinople. The traditional feeling and policy of this country were all on the side of Turkey, and against the pretensions of our old antagonist of the Crimean days. But even those who had the greatest dread of Muscovite aggressions could not listen unmoved to such a tale of horror as that which had reached us from the Turkish provinces. Men who had, up to that moment, been Philo-Turks all their lives, now shrank in disgust from the idea that we might be associated with a State under the authority of which the nameless atrocities of Batak and Tatar-Bazardjik could be perpetrated with impunity. Mr. Disraeli — who at this critical moment terminated his brilliant career in the House of Commons by the acceptance of an earldom—was anxious that the hideous stories

from Bulgaria should be disproved, and perhaps allowed his feeling of the importance of maintaining our traditional policy in the East to influence his mind in its acceptance or rejection of the newspaper intelligence on the subject. Mr. Gladstone took a different line. His retirement from public affairs, which began in 1875, had been tolerably complete during that year. In the beginning of 1876, however, he again was found taking an active part in settling the policy of the Opposition on the question of the slave circulars. When the news of the outrages committed by the Bashi-Bazouks in Bulgaria reached England, he cast off completely any affectation of retirement from active life, and, feeling that a great cause demanded his assistance, threw himself into the work of inflaming the public indignation against the authors of the murders and atrocities at Batak and Tatar-Bazardjik, with an energy which was almost phenomenal. During the latter part of August and the whole of September, 1876, the country was thrilled from one end to the other by the passionate appeals which Mr. Gladstone made to it against the conduct of those who seemed bent upon maintaining an active alliance between England and the men who were responsible for these abominable offences. By his famous pamphlet, and his speeches full of a passionate eloquence, he succeeded, in a few weeks, in reversing, for the moment, at all events, the current of the

national sympathy and policy. Mr. Forster had no part in that brilliant and remarkable crusade of September, 1876—a month notable in the history of our country. On August 15th he left London on a journey to the east of Europe, his object being to see something on the spot of the conditions of the great problem which was now demanding the attention of statesmen.

His companion on this occasion was his elder daughter, now Mrs. R. V. O'Brien; and, in writing of the tour, she says, "Of all my many journeys with my father, I think that one in 1876 was the most delightful and memorable; and that is saying a great deal, for going abroad with him, as I did nearly every year from the time I was fourteen, was always felicity to me, as well it might be. He enjoyed everything in travelling, and took an interest in everything—in seeing a new country, in genuine hard walking and climbing when he was amongst his beloved mountains, in reviving his curiously varied and often out-of-the-way historical knowledge when he was wandering among the old French chateaux on the Loire, or in the Parliament House at Stockholm, or in Moscow, among the memorials of the Russian Czars, whose strange picturesque histories had always a special fascination for him. We never seemed able to go to any remote corner of Europe that was quite a *terra incognita* to him, or about which he did not at any rate know enough to make him take a keen

interest in knowing and seeing more. For this reason sight-seeing was with him no mere form or drudgery. In fact, Oakeley and I, I am afraid, used sometimes rather to quail at the thoroughness of his explorations, and to wish in our hearts, after we had performed our first duty in a strange town, namely, going to the top of the highest tower or spire available, that the Sacristan of the Cathedral might be out, so that we should be spared our second duty—a thorough examination of all the old tombs and monuments inside. My father had a great love for old family records, and a wonderful faculty for making out and remembering the most complicated genealogies and pedigrees. For this reason he delighted in old monuments and family portraits, whether in public or private collections. In fact, I used often to notice, not only on our travels, but when staying with him at country houses, that he seemed to be more familiar with the family pedigree, and to know more about the originals of the old portraits, than our host himself.

"Another thing that made journeys with him so interesting and delightful was his enjoyment of the social side of our adventures. In addition to the friends made through his regular introductions (these often various enough) he used to make acquaintances everywhere—in trains, on long steamboat journeys, over a game of chess or whist at inns sometimes, in the oddest and most un-British circles. He seemed able, from his sym-

pathetic and humorous appreciation of men and things, to be quickly at home, and to get on to the most friendly terms with people whose society many English travellers would have avoided on the simple ground of not being familiar with their language, if on no other. I have vivid recollections of one lively evening at a small inn on the Polish side of the Carpathians, where we found ourselves (as was often the case) the only English-speaking people at the *table d'hôte*, but, so far from being isolated, were so warmly adopted into the general circle that, after we had at last retreated from the sociable hubbub of the *table d'hôte* room to the quiet of our own rooms, a deputation of our kind friends followed us upstairs to induce us to continue the acquaintance. It was a never-ceasing cause of regret to my father that he was not more familiar with French and German, in the way of a speaking knowledge, I mean, in addition to a reading one. But in spite of this great difficulty, it was astonishing how much valuable information he used to gather from his miscellaneous travelling acquaintances from sheer force of interest in their national or local affairs, and from a perfectly clear knowledge in his own mind of the particular facts that he 'wanted to get at,' as he used to say. And in addition to this power of collecting special items of information or opinions from miscellaneous individuals, his general knowledge of the political situation in the different countries, and his masterly

power of discounting the prejudices and inclinations of his interlocutor, always enabled him to set the right value on their information, and prevented him from being imposed upon.

"With all his sympathy for the man he was talking to at the moment, he never seemed to forget that there might be another side to the question, and so, often, when we were talking things over afterwards, and I was impressed with nothing but what I had last heard, he would say, 'But we must remember——' and then remind us of another aspect and set of facts which I had quite left out of account. To assist at his conversation with all our various travelling acquaintances, whether passively, or, as sometimes happened, as an amateur interpreter, was quite an education. His questions always seemed to take one straight into the heart of the subject, and his zeal to get information naturally produced a corresponding eagerness on the part of our friends to give it. All sorts of questions, political, military, social, and financial, used to come into our travelling talk; it might be with an enthusiastic Czech professor at Prague, or with a cultivated Austrian merchant returning to his home in the Bukowina, or a gentlemanly whist-playing Pole at some German watering-place, or with a party of Russian volunteers going to help the Servians, or a Hungarian Honved officer, or a Government official in a Roumanian railway carriage, or a shrewd English man of business in

the fair at Nijni Novgorod, or some high diplomatic magnate at Constantinople or Vienna, or an active politician and deputy at Berlin, Pesth, or Athens —wherever or with whomsoever it might be, my father seemed always to have the faculty of getting straight on to some topic that thoroughly interested both himself and the man he was talking to, if it was only for a five minutes' conversation.

"There was only one of his social adventures abroad of which he used to say laughingly afterwards that it had landed him in a false position. This was on our first afternoon in Moscow, when, thanks to a promptly honoured letter of introduction, he found himself at the private view at the horse-show at the great National Exhibition then being held, installed beside the General-Governor, and a brilliant circle who had come to take part in the judging and awarding of prizes before the admission of the public. My father used to say that he felt keenly how much intelligent criticism and appreciation might have been expected from him on this occasion, not only as an Englishman, but a Yorkshireman, whereas his admiration of the splendid black Orloff trotters, the wild-looking Crimean horses, and the bull-necked Finland ponies, who were paraded in solemn procession before us, could be only of the most unenlightened though cordial description."

I have given this description of Forster, not merely as a tourist, but as a traveller, from the

pen of one who was so frequently his companion, at this particular point in my narrative, not merely because of its general interest as a contribution towards the complete portrayal of his character, but because it shows with what care and thoroughness, even upon these holiday journeys of his, he sought to inform his mind. The journey of 1876 was undertaken in a great degree for a political purpose. He did not go merely to enjoy the fine scenery of the Carpathians and the Danube, but in order that he might, as an English politician, learn something by actual observation of the state of things among those Eastern nationalities in whose condition England has long taken so deep an interest. The course of his journey cannot be followed closely without unduly adding to the length of this work, but some of the more interesting passages from his letters demand transcription. At Brussels he was invited to dine with the King: "I walked to the palace punctually at seven, and found a large party already assembled. Making my way through crowds of flunkeys, the Grand Chamberlain introduced me to Lumley, our minister, upon whom I had called, not, however, finding him in. He told me I was to take in the king's daughter, the Princess of Saxe, just come back to her old home with her husband. Soon afterwards the royal party came in—the Christians with them—the King leading the Princess Christian, and Prince Christian the

Queen. The King shook me most cordially by the hand, and introduced me to his daughter. I gave her my arm in fear and trembling, but she soon reassured me by an excellent English accent. . . . In the salon I had much talk with the King about the Congo. I pressed upon him three resolutions for his conference — pressure upon Spain and Portugal, pressure upon the Khedive and other Eastern (slave) buyers, and watchfulness against coolie and South Sea traffic. He thinks of establishing stations on the east coast, not as King, but as private philanthropist, and said he hoped Belgium would be of use. He would give the society a house at Brussels, etc. I could not help telling him about my father, and how rejoiced he would have been. He said he should write to me after the conference, but hoped he might do so in French. We had some other talk, a little about the war, and I said I wished his country and Holland were together, so as to be a better match for their great neighbours."

Travelling to Prague and Cracow, he went across the mountains to the Hungarian town of Schmöcks.

"Schmöcks, Hungary, September 2nd, 1876.

"In my letter this morning I did not reply to ——'s inquiries about meetings to protest against the Bulgarian massacres. It is difficult to form

an opinion away from England, but I cannot but think meetings will do good. There is no fear of our being hurried into war against Turkey, and every manifestation of feeling which prevents our Government backing up Turkey, and which will show other nations that we do not mean to back her up, will, I think, do good. I trust, however, that all meetings will end in practical aid to the Bulgarians. Remember that aid to the wounded does not mean help to the Bulgarians, and now that our Government is giving aid to the wounded, I cannot but think that the Bulgarian claim is by far the strongest, and I expect much incidental good from British distribution."

The war between the Turks and Servians was then being waged, and at Buda-Pesth, where Forster made the acquaintance of many friends, and where he had pleasant experience of the popularity which is still enjoyed by the travelling Englishman among the Hungarians, the air was full of news from the battle-fields. He spent his time as usual in acquiring all the information he could regarding the political situation, and his letters are full of interesting comments upon Austro-Hungarian politics and of anecdotes, chiefly gathered from Professor Pulszky, of the Emperor and his concession of a constitution to the Hungarians. After a brief stay at Pesth, he and his daughter went down the Danube to Belgrade, and from thence, by way of Giurgevo to Bucharest.

To his Wife.

"Grand Hotel, Brofft, Bucharest,

"September 12th, 1876.

"My dearest Wife,

"We have seen one church, driven through the town, got our money at our bankers, and called on our Consul, Colonel Mansfield, who has kindly asked us to dinner at seven. I have had my *bain russe*, and now I may settle in for two hours' quiet writing, which from my last note at Semlin (opposite Belgrade) till now has been impossible. It has been almost the most interesting, not to say exciting, journey I have ever had, and in its immediate surroundings most pleasurable, though painful, indeed, in what I have been forced to hear. I have managed, however, to protect Flo very much from the painful details of the war. . . . But now for my doings. I finished my last note just before arriving at Semlin on Friday morning. We were welcomed there by a Hungarian official, and by a message from a lieutenant in command of one of the iron monitors, which were anchored off Semlin to keep the Servians in order, to ask us to pay them a visit. This we did, finding everything very clean and ship-shape, and then sallied out for Belgrade in a new boat, put at our disposal by Pulszky's friends. 'We' were Pulszky, Gastrell the Consul, Heron (M.P.), and selves. Semlin and Belgrade, to my surprise, are both on the right bank of the Danube, but a wide creek of

the Danube and the Save between them. The row was about three-quarters of an hour. Belgrade, with its hilly promontory, crowned with its fortress and flanked by its churches, with its wooded hills in the background, and with the mighty Danube around it, was a rememberable sight. Going up the steps at Belgrade, we met White the Consul, and Colonel Muir the M.P. It turned out I knew White; had seen him as Dantzic Consul when I was in office on the cattle plague —a tall, stout, most cordial, cheery Scotchman; and Colonel Muir welcomed me with the statement, 'I have written a letter, fourteen pages long, which I was going to send to you, when in comes White, and says, "Have you sent your letter to Mr. F. by the English post? If not, you had better wait, as he will be here in a quarter of an hour."' So now I was in the midst of the war news and war questions. Muir had been here two or three weeks, and had become intensely Servian and anti-Turk. Lindsay, on the contrary, who had returned from his journey to the front, and whom we saw at White's in the evening, was much more possessed with indignation against the Servian ministers and war party for driving the poor peasants into battle, and with the Russians for keeping up the war by their large batches of volunteers, constantly arriving. . . . At seven we met for dinner at Muir's hotel; very slowly served by drunken waiters, demoralized by

the war, and no wonder; and about nine went to the consul's. . . . Sandwith was there. He wanted me to go to the front with him, and I was sadly tempted; but Flo and time prevented. Prince Wrede was also anti-Turk, as was natural, and gave me a clever diplomatic hit. 'The war would quickly end, were it not for the Russian volunteers, and the support of European opinion.' Ristich the minister said much the same thing to me the next day; but then this was also his cue. However, I was very careful to take always the line that the Servians had done enough, and could gain nothing by continuing the war. About ten we left for our return to Semlin, our boatmen having waited for us. As White's servant guided us to the boat there were gusts of wind and blinding dust, and sheet-lightning in the horizon; but no one seemed to question the safety of our return, and as soon as we could get off, the boatmen began to pull us across the Save. The fierce current curled in short snapping waves; the wind somewhat lulled, but at any time a blast possible, and it came in a hailstorm and with a vengeance, but fortunately only a few steps from the island, which is, in fact, the left bank of the Save. The men ran us ashore as quickly as possible, and I know not when I have been more glad than I was to get out in the mud, though in that pelting rain. We made for a block-house—three or four open arches under a chamber to which there was no

ladder—where we strove to hide ourselves from the storm for half an hour or more, stumbling over some dark objects, which seemed to be logs of wood, but turned out to be soldiers, who, however, took our unintentional kicks with absolute apathy, not even grunting or rising all the time we were there. At length the storm abated; but the men did not venture to row across the creek, towing us all round it instead, so it was past midnight before we reached our Semlin inn, the inmates of which we had to wake up. . . . About ten I was back again at Belgrade, the morning fine, and the river looking innocent enough, and White on the bank, much relieved to meet us, for his man had told him of the storm. He took me and Heron at once to call on Ristich, with the understanding that I was to be left alone with the minister. He seemed an able man, but with a mask-like face, which did not remove distrust. He may, however, have acquired his fixed expression in his previous occupation, which was—what do you think?—that of a public orator at funerals. I was with him, I should think, an hour. He got out a map and showed me the exact position, past and present, of the army; seemed to me really desirous of peace, quite ready to admit that Servia could gain nothing by the continuance of war, as, after her defeat, she could not get her object, which is Bosnia. '*Nous avons fait une grande illusion*,' he said. They expected a rising in Bulgaria, but the Turks have

stamped that out, and, indeed, their cruelties and terrorism have answered their purpose, both there and against the army; for the fear of the Servian peasant soldiers is not merely fear of battle, but fear of the special Turkish horrors. He gave me a copy of the circular which he had just sent to the different consuls, respecting recent atrocities, and which I see mentioned in the *Times*, but he did not pretend to say that mere sympathy with the Bosnians had made them fight, rather than the fear of a revolution, the exceeding difficulty of their situation, and the expectation that they would get more help from the provinces, and that Greece would attack Turkey, and, above all, that Turkey itself would not prove so strong. He had a long talk with ——, who saw him after me, and to him expressed much distrust of Tchernaieff and the Russians, declaring that their original programme had been to attack on the side of Bosnia, getting Nikita to meet them; but that T. had made them change their front and attack Bulgaria, where there was no response. To me he declared, most positively, that though they expected assistance from the provinces, they did absolutely nothing to provoke insurrection, and he tried to give me the impression that they were very anxious to owe Russia as little as possible. . . . We all collected at one, at White's, to a capital luncheon, after which I went with Lindsay to call on Miss Johnston's five nurses, who are having a

special hospital, an old school, fitted up for them. They were learning Servian in a quiet hotel. . . . Two of them, without doubt, ladies. A very doubtful adventure, I think, surrounded by the pick of the adventurers, not to say cutthroats, of Europe. Their dress seems to me most foolish—that of a maid-servant; not a dress that demands respect—not to be compared with the religious habit of the Catholic sister. That morning we had come upon a notable specimen of the modern Dugald Dalgetty, a Spanish Carlist captain; a handsome fellow, but looking capable of any atrocity, disgusted with the Servian outlook (Tchernaieff evidently wishes for no volunteers but Russians), and intending to make off to Widdin to offer himself to the Turks, though declaring that two thousand resolute European soldiers, well led, could march where they pleased, spite of both armies. We returned by steamer about five, after walking round the old fortress and seeing the glorious view, and then waited at Semlin till past eleven, supping, Flo writing, and we four playing whist. The steamer was crowded with Russians, but many of them really Red Cross men, an ambulance from Kazan. I reposed till Basiasch, where, to my inexpressible comfort, I received thy note of Monday the 4th, also the *Leeds Mercury*. Okel had sent it from Vienna to the Poste Restante, and White had telegraphed to the postmaster to bring it on board. At Semendria, the head of the Morava

Valley, two or three English surgeons had joined us, intending to go with Lindsay, who, as well as Muir, was in our boat, to Widdin for help to the Turkish wounded, having set the Servian help going. The head of the party was MacCormack, a tall, handsome, most prepossessing man, from St. Thomas's, who had ridden hard from Deligrad, Tchernaieff's head-quarters. He had been in the Franco-Prussian war, but said he had no experience of horrors to be compared to this. It is, in fact, a new idea, I expect, to both sides, to have to look after their wounded; though what hospitals the Turks have are, I hear, clean and well managed."

On his way to Bucharest, and whilst staying in the Roumanian capital, Forster met with several men concerned in the Bulgarian movement against Turkish rule, as well as with Mr. Christich, a Servian ex-minister and brother-in-law of Mr. Ristich. Some of the Bulgarian refugees had heard of him in connection with the question he had asked in the House on the subject of the Turkish atrocities, and they were eager to tell him their own special tales of suffering and outrage. He took careful notes of each individual case, for the purpose of giving the information to Sir Henry Elliot when he saw him at Constantinople. On September 15th they reached Constantinople, and he took up his quarters at Misseri's Hotel.

To his Wife.

"Constantinople, September 17th, 1876.

"I must leave Flo to describe the sights of this city, which is beautiful as ever, very squalid and savage, though somewhat less so, I think, than when I was here before.

"I was much vexed to see that paragraph in the *Daily News*, and, of course, it has not made my visit easier; but I cannot say my conscience rebukes me for coming here. I get information on the question of the day, most concerning the present duty of England, such as no reading could possibly give me.

"My day's work has been equal to the worst of the House, and, though tired enough, I must make sure of some of the things I have heard. Leaving Robert College yesterday afternoon, a man in Turkish uniform got into our tram carriage; he made known his nationality by the special English expletive, and then, turning to Mure, said it was for a Turk, not him. He turned out to be a Dr. T——, lately appointed private physician to the Sultan, and his report of him was very much in accordance with Gallenga's (the *Times* correspondent) account of him to me to-day —that he had much intelligence, great want of knowledge, some force of character, and much determination to really govern. At present he is anxious to be told the truth; by help of a dictionary spells out French leaders against himself,

and has the English newspapers translated. T—— said he had sent him in the last *Punch* with the picture of the Turk with the bloody hands. He sends him generally translations of the *Daily News* and *Spectator* as well as the *Times*.

"Soon after our return to the hotel, arrived a young Bulgarian from the college with a letter from Long, showing that the Exarch would be glad to see us, but at his private house and not at the Exarchate. So Mure and I descended the steep steps and took one of the wretched, small carriages to Ortakeui, three-quarters of an hour off, on the Bosphorus—stifling work for three men in a small, shut-up brougham. His Beatitude lives in a small wooden house, most simply furnished,—a man about sixty, with large pleasing eyes, a pleasant, but not powerful, countenance, with a long black gown and high black cap. He was appointed, about three years ago, the first Exarch of the Bulgarian Church—now it is freed from Greek control—and was evidently a moderate, safe man, not a little desiring to keep himself safe. Every now and then he almost broke down with sobs; he confirmed the terrible stories, but we did not enter into details. I asked him as regards the future whether a Turkish Government would not be safe, with commissioners of the Powers to prevent injustice. Clearly he did not believe in this. 'There are,' he said, 'the consuls now.' The chief point he dwelt upon, and indeed

reiterated, was that if Bulgaria was left as it was its future condition would be worse than before these events, bad as was that.

"At the *table d'hôte* there was a man reminding me much of C——, only taller and better-looking. He introduced himself to me, and turned out to be Guercino, the Levantine father-in-law of Baring. His chief object was to defend himself against the newspaper attacks; to say how he had opposed the Turks when consul in Asia, and to explain that he had not wished, but was pressed, to go on the Commission. He inveighed against exaggeration, but admitted that, though some of the *Daily News* stories were untrue or overstated, there were others quite as bad, so that the general result was not an exaggeration.

"By-the-by, the Exarch told us that he had not seen Sir H. Elliot, but he had feared to see him or any of the other ambassadors, and he was comforted by our assurance that we would tell nobody in Constantinople that we had seen him, and would not publicly state it in England. Our young Bulgarian interpreter told us the story of the recent emancipation of the Bulgarian Church, and described the former Greek bishops as worse oppressors than the Turks.

"Now, then, for to-day's history. We were off by the 8.45 boat for Buyukderé, above Therapia. Upon the boat was Guercino. He wanted me to see the Grand Vizier, but I did not jump at this.

There can be no doubt that the Turks are now seriously alarmed about the effect of the atrocities. He told me that the Sultan himself took it much to heart. A fresh commission of four Mussulmans and four Christians starts to-morrow to examine and try. But it is thought that a trial in the provinces will be a sham, to get off the worst criminals, who are well connected here. One of the worst is a relative of Abdul Kerim, the commander-in-chief, who comes himself from a Bulgarian village. Guercino, however, did introduce us to one man well worth seeing, Aziz Pacha, who happened to be on board the steamer, and was the Governor of Philoppolis at the beginning of the insurrection, and was refused by Mahmoud Pacha (Abdul Aziz's Grand Vizier) the few regular troops with which he said he could have put it down. Panateroff had given me a good account of him when he was in London, and he certainly talked as fair as man could. He said the worst atrocities were committed by the armed Turks of the Bulgarian villages, not by the Circassians (which, indeed, every one says—the Circassians only rob), and he says that what he did in 1867 ought to have been done now—an armed police ought to have been raised of Mussulmans and Christians. He, however, is himself a Slav, in fact a Bosnian Bey, and was Governor of Belgrade during the Crimean war. He went so far as to suggest autonomy for Bosnia and Herzegovina,

and also for Bulgaria, divided into three or four parts, so as to include the Bulgarian population of Thrace and Macedonia. He seemed to consider the Mussulmans about one-third of the population. This suggestion he made at his second interview. Upon the steamer he was surprisingly frank; put himself, as he said, "in the hands of the English gentleman;" and, poor man, said he intended to come to England to thank the British Parliament for having spoken well of him.

"At Buyukdere we found Schuyler, and had full talk with him, after and during our *déjeuner;* a shrewd, clear-headed Yankee, giving a very connected account of his doings. The chief thing of importance I got from him was the extent to which the regular troops were implicated, and the market the officials had made by getting money from prisoners. I said, 'There are two questions: What ought to be done? and what can be done?' As regards the immediate future he is clear, and so is Long, that the Mussulmans must be disarmed. Remember, the Bashi-Bazouks in Bulgaria are merely the Mussulmans in the villages; some of the worst of them, the Pomaks, a clan of renegade Bulgarians. Without this, Long much fears fresh massacres this coming Ramasan, which begins this week.

"We then returned to Therapia. I had just introduced myself to Gallenga at the hotel, when Mure took me off to our Pasha, who wished to

see us again. Meantime he had called at the Embassy, and, I suppose, had heard who I was, and now dubbed me Eccellenza. The only private room we could find for our confab was a small, secluded bedroom; in fact, we are bursting with 'deadly's,' for everybody wishes nobody to know that he has been seen.

"I then went down for a chat with Gallenga. He said he believed there was a practical armistice, the Servians being unable to fight, and the Turks being told not to push forward, Russia holding off from the other powers; but he does not give credit to the fiendish Machiavellian policy ascribed to Ignatieff. He said that England and Russia ought to come to terms, that then the Turk would be powerless, and that at any rate we ought to risk the much-talked-of Turkish massacre, in which, however, he did not believe. . . . After Gallenga, I called upon Whitaker of the *Levant Herald*, a clever fellow, a friend of Lady Strangford's, but now backing up the Turks through thick and thin. It would not have done not to have seen him, but I civilly gave him my mind. This had brought us to past two, and, after a short talk with Baring, we took steamer for the station under the college. Mr. Long was intending to have taken us to the Bishop of Philippopolis, but when we got near his house, above Ortakeui, a Bulgarian was lying in wait for us with much mystery, who turned out to be the

bishop's brother, put there to warn us off, on account of the new commissioners being in the house."

In the remaining portion of this letter Forster discussed with his usual frankness and vigour the charges which had been made against Sir Henry Elliot in connection with the massacres in Bulgaria—charges of indifference and neglect,—and explained how it had come to pass that the first news of the outrages had appeared in the *Daily News* and not in the *Times*, to which the intelligence had originally been sent. It is only necessary to say, regarding this part of his investigations whilst in Constantinople, that he worked as though he had been on a Parliamentary committee at home, seeking out persons capable of giving him information in every quarter, and subjecting them to an examination of uncompromising severity. Before he left Constantinople he had an interview with Said Pasha, then high in the favour of the Sultan.

To his Wife.

"Constantinople, September 19, 1876.

"A carriage and cavass came for us at 9.30, to take us to the Sultan's Bosphorus palace, where, indeed, he is living, and where our Pasha, who is Deputy-Chamberlain, had rooms. . . . We were ushered into a room where we found Said Pasha, a tall fat Turk, curled up on a sofa, and two

Englishmen unknown to me, one of whom turned out to be a Scudamore. The Pasha spoke English well — brought up at Woolwich and Edinburgh. He was a thorough gentlemen, and got well over a little *contre-temps*. Our introducers, Sir George Thomas and Mr. Smyth of the Ottoman Bank, had not turned up, and I do not think he at first knew who we were. . . . I said how glad I was to hear of a suspension of hostilities (in Servia). 'It might only be a patch-up,' he said. 'Russia was always intriguing to cause insurrections.' 'May I venture to tell your Excellency how we, in England, think you might defeat any intrigue by Russia? and that is, by giving the provinces such a Government as would take away the desire for insurrection.' My first shot, which brought us well into action, and our two Englishmen soon turned up. He complained much of Gladstone's pamphlet, and the manner in which he had spoken of the Turks. I could reply I had not read his pamphlet—only his speech, which did not contain such invective. He gave me his story of the Bulgarian business. He then drew a black picture of the Government system. The head of each department was a Sultan himself—absolute and uncontrolled. They were now aiming at responsible ministers. 'Without doubt,' I said, 'this must be necessary for good government; without it the country must be hopeless and the Sultan helpless.' I then took up my parable. 'Your Excellency is doubtless

aware that I have no official position. Colonel Mure and myself belong to what we call the Opposition, though I trust this matter will not be made a party question. But would you like to have my opinion for whatever it is worth, of the grounds for the feeling now expressed by my countrymen?' Of course he wished me to be frank, in a very gentlemanly and apparently sincere manner. 'There was real reluctance in the British people to think ill of their old ally; but though I wanted not to enter into the details of the Bulgarian business, the admitted general result had excited very strong feeling. There were, however, three things which, if done by the Turkish Government, would, I think, convince our people that they were doing what they could to meet the immediate necessities. First, real compensation to the sufferers: to those who had lost their husbands and fathers and mothers and daughters; to the thousand who, I was told, were left out of the four thousand at Batak' (at this he showed neither anger nor surprise), 'and to those whose property had been unjustly taken from them. Next, the punishment which I was glad to hear from his Excellency would be inflicted upon the chief instigators of the excesses, however high their station, and so that the public would know that they were punished; and, lastly, the disarmament of the Bashi-Bazouks.' 'This was difficult,' he said; 'because they were now under

command'—meaning, I suppose, enrolled. This disarmament is the great difficulty of the Government. For it they have not strength; but without it outrages are certain. Soon after, he fired back at me. 'We must make allowance for the feeling of the friends of those who were murdered. We had had our Indian mutiny. He was in England at the time, and had seen ladies grind their teeth in talking of revenge.' 'Your Excellency,' I said, 'is so good an Englishman that you will know our proverb. I will not enter into comparisons of blackness; but two blacks do not make a white.' We all laughed, and were very amicable. . . . He then talked about reforms—the earnestness of the Sultan to effect them. He had even said he would give up his rights if it were for the good of his country. 'You must help us,' he said. 'We want to get some constitutional government, though we are not yet fit for yours.' I expressed sympathy, which I am sure I felt, with their difficulties, and for the Sultan, and this enabled me to touch a little on the most difficult question of autonomy. 'Good government of the Turks,' (which he had said was very much wanted), 'and a constitution for them, would be merely the Athenian surrounded by Helots, unless given also to the Christians. We feared in England there must be autonomy, unless the Christians were admitted to perfect social equality and to the army.' He was quite ready for that. . . . We

parted quite affectionately. He is one of the multitude who are to come and see us in London. The interview had some little possible importance, as at present Said is in the Sultan's good graces, and may repeat the talk to him. . . .

"*Wednesday*, 10 *p.m.* — Just arrived from Count Zichy's, the Austrian ambassador's. Poor Flo must put down something before we go to bed. The Austrian is the only ambassador at Pera during the summer, and he lives at the foot of a ladder of stairs, so Flo went in a sedan chair, and was carried into a hall, where crowds of soldier flunkeys helped her out. To my surprise, no madame; eight or nine men, mainly attachés, but Count Corti, the Italian minister. To my horror Count Zichy addressed me in French. 'Je parle Français très mal,' said I. 'C'est la faute de mon éducation que je ne parle pas l'Anglais,' said the Hungarian magnate. But on the other side of me there was a young Austrian baron, who spoke English and remembered meeting you at Lady Waldegrave's. Our talk was very interesting. The count apologized for not calling to-day. He had had 'occupations très graves.' Hostilities were only suspended till next Tuesday, but 'there is nothing to fear; there will be many suspensions for ten days.' Both the ambassadors were very anti-Turk. I expected this from the Italian, but not from the Austrian. The last told us that the Governor of Adrianople had been dis-

missed—'parce qu'il n'avait pas enterré les cadavres, et détruit les evidences.' And Count Corti told me a tremendous fact—that the present Grand Vizier, at the very beginning of the Bulgarian business, had told him how he would put down the insurrection, and had described 'la système par terreur'—precisely what I said in my speech. Both of them laughed at the supposed machinations of Ignatieff. He was not responsible for the non-employment of the regulars when Aziz Pasha demanded them; he had merely said, 'Do not make too much of the insurrection in Bulgaria.' . . . Nevertheless they neither of them seemed to suppose Bulgaria fit for autonomy, though the Italian was more prepared for it than the Austrian. Count Zichy said, 'Votre discours avait en un grand effet ici'—probably a diplomatic compliment; but Corti said that he thought the present agitation had saved England from a great mistake, though he also thought it was now going too far; but he said that, if England and Russia agreed, the Turk was helpless. I said to the two ambassadors that the Turks seemed to me to have only one resource, the power of massacring. 'Was that a real danger?' They thought it was a danger, but exaggerated. . . We had a beautiful dinner, and the count told me he had tapped a bottle of the very best Tokay from his estate in my honour, and he conducted Flo down to the hall when we came away."

Before leaving Constantinople, Forster, strongly against the advice of some of his friends, accepted an invitation to a dinner-party given by a notorious Philo-Turk. He was determined, however, to hear both sides. At that time the war of intrigue in Stamboul and Pera was at its height, and, as was natural, a man of Forster's position in the House of Commons, who had already held high office and who was certain to hold it again, was the object of almost as many intrigues as though he had been the Sultan himself. It was not an easy thing for any man, especially for one comparatively unversed in Oriental craft, to steer safely through the conflicting currents which were whirling around him. But he had two means of protecting himself—his native shrewdness, developed during years of business in Yorkshire, and his inflexible rule always to hear both sides of a question before making up his mind regarding it. At this dinner he certainly heard the other side, and he expresses his "amazed astonishment" at some of the statistics which were offered to him as evidence on behalf of the Turks—statistics which, as it happens, were contradicted by every official document in existence. But during the whole time of his stay in Constantinople, Mr. Forster had other means of acquiring knowledge of the actual condition of affairs besides those afforded by his frequent meetings with influential Europeans and Turkish officials. The American missionaries at the Robert College were

impartial witnesses, and they gave him much valuable aid; whilst, day by day, during his whole sojourn, his rooms at Misseri's were besieged by Bulgarians and Armenians, who came to him—often by stealth—to tell him the story of hideous wrongs suffered by themselves or by those near and dear to them. He heard all these tales, which would have been tedious in their endless reiteration if it had not been for their terrible character, with patience, and gave his interlocutors such advice and assistance as he could. "As the steamer moved off for Varna, I said, 'Heaven be thanked!' for if I had stopped much longer, Stamboul would have become too hot for me."

Summing up, whilst on the way home, some of "the final impressions which had survived the confusion of conflicting statements and stories," he wrote: "The drilled private Turk soldier has many virtues—very brave, very handy, good-tempered, sober, obedient. Some of the atrocities have certainly been committed by the Regulars, but any army would have done the same if encouraged, not checked, by their officers. The officers are worse than their men, and the fat pasha generals the worst of all. The Government is beyond description bad, ignorant, inefficient, corrupt—places bought or given to despicable favourites, merit going absolutely for nothing. The Minister of Marine, Achmet Kaiserley, cannot, for example, read or write, and has no especial force of character.

. . . The new Sultan, if strong, can still do a great deal; but a constitutional Government, resting on the balance of forces, seems to me impossible, for there are no forces to balance. Russia is the bugbear of the Turks and of the old school of English; Ignatieff's opposition is the excuse for every failure, and his advice for every mistake; and every insurrection is created by Russian agents. I do not believe it. Without doubt for many years the Russian aim has been to replace the Turks by Christians, whereas our aim has been to keep the Turk where he is. Therefore the Christians have naturally looked to the Russians, as the Turks have to us. We might have done much with the Turk if, to use the expression of some of the best of them, 'we had done as they wanted—beaten them with a stick till they did right;' but since the Crimean war we have done nothing but encourage their extravagance by lending them money, and encourage them in misrule by telling them that we would save them from its natural consequence, punishment by Russia. The first thing now to do is for us and Russia, if possible, to agree, and then ask the other powers to consent. Austria, or rather Hungary, would be unable to refuse. But what to ask for? Take Bulgaria. Promises of better rule are waste-paper. An European commission by the side of the Turkish officials seems impracticable, and would end either in military occupation or in nothing. Absolute autonomy is

a desperately strong measure. If given to the Bulgarian people, the Greeks would demand either autonomy for Thessaly and Epirus, or their addition to the Greek kingdom, and, seeing that Bulgaria is not at present in insurrection, I do not see how, if autonomy be given to it, the Greeks could be refused. This would reduce European Turkey almost to the city of Constantinople. Would the Turks accept this without a death-struggle? Most persons say no, and prophesy a massacre of Christians in Asia Minor and an attempt at it in Europe. As regards Europe, I do not believe it. . . . But this is an extreme measure, especially when the immediate effect of absolute autonomy is, to say the least, doubtful. . . . Upon the whole, were I entrusted to make terms with Turkey for Bulgaria, I would ask for absolute autonomy and ask strongly, proving to the Turk that he had brought the demand upon himself; but I would hear his counter-proposals. There is no such bargain-maker as the Turk, either in politics or in the bazaar, and the ultimate result might be local self-government, Christian governors in Christian villages, Christians admitted in fair proportions to the civil offices, to the police, and also to the army. But this would require not only a promise to the European powers, but a pledge, the fulfilment of which these powers should have the authority to enforce."

Such were Forster's views at that epoch in the history of the Eastern question. Returning by

way of Vienna, he had some talk with our ambassador, Sir Andrew Buchanan, whom he found, like most of our representatives abroad, disturbed by the unprecedented uprising of feeling in England which had followed Mr. Gladstone's pamphlet and speeches, though inclined to take a more practical view of the new situation which had thus been created than were some of his colleagues. England was reached early in October, and Forster's first act was to arrange for a meeting with his constituents, in order that he might address them on the absorbing question of the hour.

CHAPTER IV.

FOREIGN POLICY OF THE TORY GOVERNMENT.

Mr. Forster's speech to his constituents after the termination of his visit to the East excited an altogether unusual amount of public interest. His position in the Liberal party would, of course, have made the speech an important one under any circumstances; but that autumn of 1876 had witnessed a complete revolution in the political sentiments of this country, so far as regarded our foreign policy, and the first utterances of a statesman after that revolution had been effected had therefore a special interest for the country at large. There was, however, a third reason for the interest which attached to Mr. Forster's speech, that far outweighed either of the others. Whilst other statesmen had been discussing the question of the future of Turkey upon the evidence furnished by Blue-books and newspapers, Mr. Forster had gone to the fountain-head. He had been upon the spot; he had actually talked with those "unspeakable Turks" who were being held up to the condemnation of the whole civilized

world; he had listened to the stories of outrage and cruelty as they fell from the lips of men who had themselves been the victims of the abominable misgovernment of Bulgaria, and he had heard all that could be urged in palliation of that misgovernment by the rulers who were directly responsible for it.

Mr. Gladstone's tremendous indictment of Turkish misrule, though it had carried the overwhelming majority of the nation with it, had excited the deepest wrath among those politicians who clung to the old ideas and who did not sufficiently recognize the influence of moral feeling in the domain of politics. Many of these men believed that the stories which had shocked the nation when they were first made known in the summer were mere "coffee-house babble," the inventions or exaggerations of newspaper correspondents. Such persons looked with hope to Mr. Forster, fondly believing that he would justify their incredulity and prove to the world that, after all, the Turkish Administration was not so bad as it seemed. On the other hand it cannot be doubted that those who had followed Mr. Gladstone in his first righteous cry of indignation against the authors of the massacres of Batak and Tatar-Bazardik were now even more Gladstonian than Mr. Gladstone himself, and they expected from Mr. Forster, not merely an emphatic confirmation of every statement contained in the

pamphlet on the Bulgarian horrors, but a strenuous support of the bag and baggage policy, not as it had been formulated by Mr. Gladstone himself, but as it was popularly understood by those who wished to outdo the ex-Premier in his detestation of the Turk.

Mr. Forster disappointed both of these important sections of the public by his speech to his constituents. He disregarded, on the one hand, the strong temptation which was offered to him of regaining all his lost popularity with the Radicals by the simple process of saying ditto to Mr. Gladstone. On the other hand he resolutely refused to echo the argument of the old official class. The reality of the outrages, as they had been described in the pages of the *Daily News*, was fully admitted by him, and the unspeakable iniquity of the system under which such outrages had been possible was duly exposed. Further than this, he declared that England, even if her own selfish interests might be affected by her repudiation of the old alliance with Turkey, had no right to put those interests for a single moment in the scale against her duty to the victims of the Pashas, who depended so largely for the maintenance of their authority upon English support. In all this, of course, he gratified to the fullest extent the adherents of the bag and baggage policy. It was when he came to discuss the remedy for existing evils that he caused these

persons bitter disappointment. The autonomy of the Christian provinces of Turkey, he pointed out, could not be obtained without a war—a statement which subsequent events most fully justified, and which it is difficult to understand that even the most heated partisan could have resented at the time when it was made. It was clear to his mind that, until Turkey had suffered defeat on the field of battle, she would never consent to give up her dominion over the most important provinces in her empire. The next point to be considered was what was the utmost that could be wrung from her without a resort to the sword? Forster's proposal was that, by the concerted action of the great powers of Europe, the Sultan should be compelled to give a constitution to the Christian provinces of the Balkan Peninsula similar to that enjoyed by Crete, a constitution which should be under the guarantee of the Great Powers and subject to their supervision and control.

It is not easy to understand why this proposal should have excited the bitter anger of an important portion of the Liberal party, except for the fact that virtually the suggestion had already been adopted by Lord Derby, then Foreign Secretary, and that consequently political capital could not be made out of his speech by the opponents of the Government. Still the fact remains that he was bitterly assailed for his failure to endorse the policy of bag and baggage to the uttermost, and

that one at least of his critics thought it right to insinuate that he had simply made this proposal because it seemed to him a safe thing to take the middle course on any important public question on which opinion was seriously divided. The reader who has followed Mr. Forster's statement of his views as recorded in the preceding chapter will know how utterly false was this particular interpretation of his motives, and will understand that the opinions which he expressed at Bradford, after Lord Derby had written his despatch proposing a joint appeal to Turkey for the concession of a constitution to the Christians, were precisely identical with those which he had formed when on the spot at Constantinople after a close investigation of all the circumstances of the case. Among those critics who were most severe upon him was the *Spectator*, and to one of the editors of that journal he wrote as follows, in reply to some criticisms upon his speech :—

To R. H. HUTTON, ESQ.

"Wharfeside, Burley-in-Wharfedale, Leeds,
"October 11th, 1876.

"MY DEAR HUTTON,

"Your letter grieves me not a little. I am very sorry you so dislike my speech, though I wonder that, after our conversation, you did not expect it. I hate differing from you, especially on this matter, and it is not pleasant to think you

also think me a "trimmer," though, as you do think so, it is the act of a friend to say so. Please bear in mind two or three things. (1) All my approval of Lord Derby's proposal is based upon the supposition that it does really demand from Turkey the concession to the powers of a treaty right to secure the fulfilment of her promise. (2) This supposition is not an unreasonable one, inasmuch as Russia assented to the proposal. The letter of the Czar to the Austrian Emperor was not an alternative proposal, but a suggestion as to what Austria and Russia should do together if Turkey refused. (3) The immediate question when I spoke was whether it was wise to press upon Turkey the acceptance of this proposal, and the fear which I had was that Turkey would be encouraged by the *Standard*, *Telegraph*, and *Pall Mall* to try to put off the powers by a mere promise of better government. What, therefore, I had in my mind was not the substitution of local for absolute autonomy; but pressure upon Turkey to accept the actual and, in fact, only proposal which had been made by the six powers. At the same time I abide by my incidental statement that it was wise at first to make the proposal which I suppose to have been made. I believe, and I am glad to believe, that the beginning of the end is come, and that the rule of the Turk in Europe, and perhaps also in Asia, is doomed. The question is, how best to arrive at the end; how to

let this desirable doom be accomplished with the least accompaniment of evil, and how to replace the bad present by the best future; which best future, I agree with you, would be the establishment of free Christian communities. So much for aim and object; but as to means, you would ask nothing short of independence for the three provinces, preserving the suzerainty of the Turk, but depriving him, as in Servia, of all internal control. I would be willing, before demanding this independence, to put upon the Turk the responsibility of refusing the demand by Europe that local self-government and equal treatment of Moslem and Slav should be secured by a European guarantee. Now, as regards your plan, I fear Turkey would not accept it without war, inasmuch as Thessaly and Epirus, also Albania, must follow suit, and European Turkey would, in fact, be restricted to Constantinople. This war, though certain to end in Turkish defeat, would be desperate and bloody, and especially dangerous to the Armenians and other Christians in Asia, whom we ought not to forget. (4) Absolute autonomy cannot be established without foreign occupation—that is, a foreign army to oblige Moslems to submit. It is desirable, if possible, to avoid the European jealousies that may arise from foreign occupation.

"Now, with regard to this plan, it is stated, (1) That it could not work. (2) That it would

not be effective. (3) That it would impose upon the powers, especially England, intolerable responsibilities. I admit that it would be difficult to work, that really good government might not be the immediate result, and that the responsibilities might be onerous; but, after all, we must remember that we have only a choice of difficulties and evils and dangers. I do not feel myself competent to declare that plans proposed by such experts as Lord Stratford de Redcliffe and my Constantinople correspondent, whose letter you will, I hope, see in Friday's *Times*, are altogether impracticable; and, as regards efficiency, remember that by a moral repudiation of physical pressure Europe would have obliged the Porte to enact reforms, would have a voice in the choice of the first administrators, and would be known to have a force at hand ready to compel submission to the new *régime*. Can any one deny that Bulgaria, for instance, would be therefore put upon the road to free self-government? Then, as regards our responsibilities, what I have to compare them with are the responsibilities involved in the war which would probably result from the other course. There are those who would say that we ought to hold off altogether and fold our hands, and let the Eastern question solve itself. This would be our best course if we had no duties to fulfil and no interests to protect. The question seems to me to lie between the immediate dismemberment

of the European dominions of the Porte, and a participation by Europe in its government of its Christian subjects. The advantages of the latter plan would be that, if accepted by the Porte, war would be avoided, and the joint action of the six powers would be maintained.

"So much in explanation of my speech, and in reply to your charge of a love of compromise for compromise' sake; but events both march and change quickly. An armistice, I am glad to say, seems probable, and time will thus be given to the six powers for concerted action. It seems to me, then, that men who like you and me have a common ultimate object of replacing the Moslem rule by free Christian commonwealths, but who, I suppose, also agree in preferring to attain this object if possible without a desperate war, ought (1) to cling to concerted action among the powers, and (2) to support the Government in any measure tending toward our object, while at the same time keeping up the pressure for its realization.

"What a long scrawl you have made me write. Show this to T——, and ask him to look at Friday's *Times* for the letters I sent up, and for one which I have sent with it which contains much of this.

"Yours ever,

"W. E. Forster."

Whatever might be the criticisms upon his action of those who regarded him as a "trimmer,"

Forster still clung steadily to his own line of opinion with regard to the question which excited so deep an interest throughout Europe, and which was the cause of such serious difference of opinion in England.

To Monsieur Pulszky, *Buda-Pesth.*

"Wharfeside, Leeds, October 24th, 1876.

"My dear Mr. Pulszky,

"'Great excitement at Pesth,' says my paper. 'Great anti-Russian demonstration expected. Torchlight processions suggested to the Turkish Consul, etc., etc.' Exaggerations, I do not doubt; but I can well understand that the crisis just now must intensely interest you all, and I can imagine the debates in the Casino and the Liberal Club. We think of little else in England, but to us it is a dilettante matter compared to you. I hope with all my heart you will keep your tempers and your heads, and not make a rash scare. Surely it is getting plainer and plainer every day that Turkish rule in Europe will weigh down you or any one who tries to keep it up. Our philo-Turks are doing their best to scare us about Russia; but they will not succeed in bringing us into war. As to the chances of war between Russia and Turkey—that is, open war—it is no use wrangling about them, they alter so from day to day. One tendency of importance I have been altogether unable to follow—the inten-

tion of Roumania. Russia must have got at her since I was at Bucharest. I suppose your Parliament is now sitting. I do not think our session will begin before its usual time—that is, February. . . . Since our return I have been kept very quiet by a vile cold, caught between Vienna and Dover; but it is better now. I often look back to our pleasant Danube trip, and feel that, thanks to you, I understand your relations to the great question of the day far better than I did before.

"Yours very truly,

"W. E. FORSTER.

"If Eber is with you, tell him I now always look first in the *Times* for his letters."

It was in the midst of this strong political excitement that Forster visited Aberdeen for the purpose of delivering his address as Lord Rector. The address dealt with the question of the help which university life could offer a man in training himself to be a capable politician. "You could hardly," said Forster, addressing the students, "have found a rector less versed in scholastic knowledge or more ignorant of college life than myself. However, here I am, and my present business is to talk to you for an hour or so. . . . One thing is quite clear; you are a new force just come into the field; you, or most of you, have the battle of manhood still to fight, though some of you, I suspect, have already rehearsed it only too

faithfully in childhood. Your drill is not yet over; your posts are not yet fixed; you are, as it were, in training at the depôt. Above all, you will have to fight hard, and you know it. If Oxford or Cambridge were blessed with a rector, he would in delivering his address have before him many young men who would suppose that life had no struggles for them, was to be to them a journey of pleasure. Poor fellows! they would soon discover their mistake; but you will not make that mistake. You know that you, almost all of you, have to make your own way, and to earn the pay you will get. So far I am one of you. I, also, had to make my own way; but when I come to the path in life on which I set out, but few of you, I imagine, intend to tread it. Not many of you, I suppose, are looking forward to a commercial career, but the large majority of you to professions, either legal or medical or clerical or scholastic. Well, then, how can you and I find a common ground? Is there nothing on which you might expect me to give you any counsel? I think there is one matter, and that of no slight interest. I am a politician. For some years politics have been my chief occupation. You all of you are, or will be, or ought to be, more or less, politicians. Let us consider, during the short time that we are together to-day, what help your university life can offer you in training yourselves to be capable politicians. . . . Who are the real governors of the nation? Not

the ministers, who are the servants of the Sovereign. Not the Sovereign, who chooses these ministers in order that they may carry out the will of the people. Not even the voters, who are, as it were, the machines by which its will is discovered, expressed, and registered; but the men who influence this will, and persuade the voters, who regulate and modify public opinion by writing, by talk, by books, or pamphlets or newspaper articles, or sermons or speeches, by conversation with acquaintances or friends, and, above all, by the example of their lives. Now, surely our universities ought to turn out men able in one or other of these ways to influence public opinion."

Speaking, later on, of the character of the work which falls upon the politician in this country, he said, "Not since Rome in the height of its power has any Government had such duties to perform, such problems to solve, so many human beings dependent upon its action, as that free and public Government in which all of us here present have, or will have, our share. It is no matter for boast or for national pride; it is rather a matter for most serious and anxious thought: for, be assured of this, no nation can afford to leave its duties unfulfilled, its problems unsolved. With nations the unprofitable servant is assuredly cast into outer darkness. Nations can only be saved by works; for them no death-bed repentance will avail; their balance must, on the whole, be on the right side. Let us

try for a moment to weigh the burden which our country has taken on itself—

> "'That weary Titan
> Staggering on to her goal,
> Bearing on shoulders massive,
> Atlantean, the load,
> Well-nigh not to be borne,
> Of the too vast orb of her fate!'

"We often talk of our Indian empire. What does it really mean? Government in India is a terrible reality. It means not merely law and order, safety to life and property, but protection to more than two hundred million of men from the forces of nature—more destructive, alas! there than elsewhere,—from pestilence and from hunger; and such an arrangement of taxation as shall not dry up the springs of industry: such a foreign rule from without as, while controlling the native forces within, shall not starve or stifle, but rather nourish and strengthen them. Turn from Asia to Africa. Take only one among many African illustrations. The present and future well-being of those myriads who dwell between the Cape Colony and the tropics rests now upon the wisdom of our colonial Government more than any other human agency. Leave Africa, and go to the other side of the world, and we find the very existence of the islanders of the Pacific endangered also by bold lawlessness, and only to be saved by English laws and English administration. There is, I fear, sometimes a recklessness and cynicism in the manner in which

we forget our responsibilities in dealing with other countries, and, as it were, play with their existence in the exuberance of our power. Take, for instance, the hundreds of millions in the vast empire of China. Many of you will have read pamphlets or speeches or leading articles, coolly discussing whether some step or another, taken to promote our special interests, to push our trade, to save our dignity, or, as it is termed, assert our position, may not break this country and expose its inhabitants to all the terrible evils of anarchy. These cynical writers may overrate our power, but no doubt for destruction it is immense and terrible. Nor is this power to be despised for protection and for beneficent reform. All politicians must sometimes feel that they are but flies upon the wheel of destiny; but a British politician will also occasionally find that his word or his act, apparently unimportant, has, as it were by accident, a great result, owing to the immense force of the machine with which he has to do. . . . Nor is Great Britain only an Asiatic and African and Australian or an American power. Our European neighbours, who wish us to do their work for them, to fight their battles, or to pull their chestnuts out of the fire, are never tired of taunting us with our insular indifference and our shopkeeping apathy. Nevertheless, money-lovers and money-worshippers as we are, it is a foreign question which for many weeks has possessed the public mind. In our

intense sensitiveness regarding our national responsibilities, sometimes we seem to forget that England alone cannot solve the Eastern problem. But there is no doubt that the safety and well-being, the protection from dire oppression and foul outrage, of millions of men and women in European and Asiatic Turkey, do in great measure depend on the part our ministers take in the present international deliberations. Surely it ought to be a cause of rejoicing to men of all political parties that the people, the real governors whom all ministers must serve, have shown unmistakably that in this matter they desire the just and right thing done, and not merely that which might seem to serve some special British interest."

After glancing at the many problems of domestic policy with which the politician has to deal, and at the dangers to society which lie in the spread of materialism, he touched upon the question of faith in an overruling Power as part of the equipment of the statesman.

"It is but the old problem of fate and free will in a new form, which history will prove to you has never been solved. The stories of other men's lives, as well as the experience of your own, force you to admit that the unsolvability of this problem is a condition of existence, but history will also tell you this, in which you may take comfort, that, as with individuals so with nations, just in proportion as there has been a sense of the over-

ruling Power, call it fate, or God's will, or the law of humanity—and if there be a law, must there not be a Lawgiver?—just in proportion as this conviction has possessed men and nations with its awful truth, have those men and those nations shown the power of their individual wills. The disciples and St. Paul obeyed the call; Mahomet believed in his mission; William III. was a Calvinist; Napoleon had faith in his star. . . . It is when men have had faith in the unseen that they have had power for themselves, and therefore power for others, and then it has been that the world has made its steps forward; and if at any time there has been a nation more than others possessed by this faith, hearing the call from above, seeing the work which has to be done, the task to be fulfilled, that nation has then led the van in the world's march. And as it has been, so it will be; and there are some who are not without the hope that in our, or rather in your, time, and in our country, there may again be faith as there was of old; who feel that Englishmen and Scotchmen long to have the religious fervour without the fierceness of the Puritans or the followers of John Knox, and that this longing will not be always in vain. We have been warned that there is a religious rock ahead far more dangerous than the political or the economic rock—the divorce, as it has been termed, of this country from its religion. If there be really this divorce

no one can exaggerate the danger; but amid all the religious confusion, all the Church quarrels, which beset us, there seem to me some signs that the intellect of our country will not only not be divorced from religion, but will again find its full religious expression."

Finally he said, in summing up the qualifications of the true politician,—

"There remain these two absolute necessities—the knowledge, the quick perception, of right and wrong; and the desire to do right. It is not for me to turn this address into a sermon or to attempt to preach the lessons which many a man here has learned in his Highland home from the Bible read by the father or mother; but remember this, that the politician you have so kindly heard to-day, declares that of all possible occupations politics is the most unprofitable, the least worth following, if for any personal or still more tempting party object its true aim be forgotten; and that true aim is this—the fulfilment by our country of her duty, by which fulfilment, and by which alone, can be secured her power and her superiority and the well-being of her sons."

Such was Forster's confession of faith as given to the young students of Aberdeen; nor could his real sense, both of the dignity and the duties of the politician in this country, be more faithfully expressed than in the words I have quoted.

His visit to Aberdeen was a memorable triumph,

and was all the more gratifying to him because of the stormy waters through which he had been passing ever since the Education Act had been placed upon the statute-book. He and Mrs. Forster were the guests of Dr. and Mrs. Webster.

From his Diary.

"*November 24th.*—Went to music-hall a little before twelve. In committee-room Dr. Pirie—the principal, being ill—presented me with the degree in the name of the senatus. I made a short reply, and was clothed in gown, hood, and cap. Professor —— came in, in high excitement. The proceedings must be stopped; the students more uproarious than ever; 'they have torn up the benches.' However, when I got in, they behaved very well, cheering furiously, and occasionally whistling, but on the whole attentive. Art students in red, medicals in plain dress. My address took hour and a quarter."

On the 27th the freedom of the city was presented to him before a great assemblage of the citizens at the music-hall, and in his reply he spoke chiefly of the Eastern question. That evening he was entertained at supper by the students, in the large hall at the Marischal College, and there soon established himself on the best of terms with his friends. The visit to Aberdeen was

a pleasant and cheering end to a year of not a little excitement and anxiety.

The year 1877 was a momentous one in European politics. The conference at Constantinople, at which England was represented by Lord Salisbury as special envoy, broke up without result, and Russia, after the usual period of diplomatic equivocations and military preparations, entered upon the long-dreaded war for the subjugation of the Turk. Public opinion in this country was seriously divided. The effects of Mr. Gladstone's anti-Turkish campaign in the previous autumn were still felt, and very few men of importance in the political world would have ventured to advocate active interference on our side for the purpose of maintaining the Porte in full possession of her power in the Balkan Peninsula. On the other hand, with the actual outbreak of war between the forces of the Czar and those of the Sultan, all our old suspicions of Russian good faith were reawakened, and the party known at the time as "Jingoes" came into existence. In this party were to be found many Liberals, who disapproved of the severity with which Mr. Gladstone had exposed the atrocities of Mussulman rule, and who believed that, after all, the first duty of an Englishman under the existing circumstances was to prevent any extension of Russian influence in Europe. On the other hand, there were divisions in the ministerial camp. Lord Salisbury had been not a little

disgusted by what he had seen at Constantinople; and, if popular report at this time was to be believed, he came back far more favourably inclined towards the Christians of the East, and especially the Greeks, than towards the Turks. There were other influential men among Lord Beaconsfield's supporters who did not approve of his policy in foreign affairs, and who dreaded lest what seemed to be his reckless determination to oppose Russia in every stage of her advance towards Constantinople might end by landing this country in a war.

It was in the high places of Liberalism, however, that the greatest difficulty was felt at that time. Mr. Gladstone's complete withdrawal from political life, as we have seen, had been of very short duration, and he was now as energetic an opponent of the ministerial policy as he had ever been during the course of his life. But he still refused to take the responsible leadership of his party. That post continued to be filled by Lord Hartington, and it is needless to say that the difficulties the latter had to encounter as leader of a minority in the House of Commons were enormously increased by the fact that he had to deal, not merely with his followers, but with his brilliant predecessor in the leadership, who could at any moment by his own individual action lead the Liberal party throughout the country into any course to which he might choose to direct them, whether it was one which commended itself to the

judgment of Lord Hartington or not. Without entering into any discussion as to the merits of the situation which was thus created, it is at least obvious that it was one of the greatest delicacy and difficulty for Lord Hartington. He had, however, in Mr. Forster a most loyal friend and supporter during the whole of this trying time. Forster, indeed, could not forget that he had himself been nominated for the post of leader, and that undoubtedly a large section of the party would have preferred his appointment to that of Lord Hartington. He felt bound, in justice to those who looked to him as the foremost representative of their opinions, to make his influence felt in the counsels of the party, and, as a matter of course, he took a very prominent part in the deliberations among the leaders, which were so frequent during the year. But, throughout, his personal loyalty to his official leader was beyond dispute, and he unquestionably did much to smooth Lord Hartington's path during this anxious period. His diary for the year is full of interesting accounts of the political anxieties and disquietness of the time and of the discussions—often very perplexing and unsatisfactory—which took place among the Liberal leaders. There are comparatively few of his memoranda on these subjects which it would be fair to those who survive him to reproduce here. A few extracts from the diary will, however, suffice to indicate both the atmosphere

in which he was living at the time and the part which he himself was playing in connection with public affairs.

"*February 5th.*—Called on Hartington about one. Good friendly talk with him. Found we very much agreed in not wishing war with Turkey against Russia. Called afterwards on Granville, and found him agreeing to this, but inclined to suggest a European demand for the cancelling of the neutralizing half of the 8th article of 1856 treaty. Dined at Granville's. Gladstone and Mrs. G., Lord and Lady Cardwell, Hartington and self. My dearest not able to go. A very long talk, but G. very reticent, rather provokingly so. He and Lord Cardwell said how repentant Lord Aberdeen had been for the Crimean war. After a long time Granville pointed to his proposal; but Gladstone did not catch at it; was strongly of opinion the Turks could not fulfil their promises, even if they wished to do so.

"*February 7th.*—I had to go to meeting at Granville's of ex-Cabinet, with Harcourt and James. Harcourt, Argyll, and Gladstone very hot, but final result general agreement that Granville and Hartington should press for further general action of the powers, a European demand from Turkey, with a threat of coercion, if not complied with threat to be carried out. England to assent to and even to initiate such action, but not to be committed to separate action with Russia. I

agreed, but said we must guard against the danger of finding ourselves involved in separate action with Russia, by reason of no other power responding to our initiative.

"*February* 10*th.*—Breakfast at Grillion's. Large attendance. Sat between Paget and Acland. Salisbury there just before breakfast. After breakfast I had some talk with him, after the others had left. 'Were you surprised by Midhat's fall?' No; he had prevented the Sultan giving in, and he thought they would not get on together—thought Said and Mahommed Daoud had much to do with his fall; that Midhat was *entêté;* administrative faculty, energy, and pluck, but not much else. Sultan doubtful; a man who had displaced two Sultans, Ahmed Vefvik, the most power of any men he saw, but obstinate, though at the council he had declared in favour of concession. Ignatieff, clever and pleasant, but too active, and had early let the Turks find out that he wished for peace. He, Salisbury, had been glad to get away; for some time had thought that conference could do no further good.

"*March* 19*th.*—A note from Lady Salisbury, asking Jane and me down on Tuesday to meet the Ignatieffs. We could not go, because engaged; but I volunteered to turn up at breakfast, Wednesday morning."

The visit to Hatfield was duly paid in the manner proposed by Forster, and the result was a

talk between him and General Ignatieff, the importance of which has not even yet quite passed away, and the report of which, as drawn up in Forster's memorandum, is altogether too fully characteristic of his frank and unconventional methods in diplomacy to be omitted here :—

"On Monday, Lady Salisbury asked my wife and myself to go down to Hatfield last evening, to meet the Ignatieffs. We were engaged, to my great vexation, but I volunteered to turn up at breakfast this morning. And accordingly went down by midnight train, slept at Salisbury Arms, and appeared just as they were coming out of chapel to early breakfast.

"The General, of course, was diplomatic enough to be sorry he had missed me at Constantinople—had read and approved my speeches, etc., etc. He himself rattled away incessantly, with the utmost apparent abandon — generally in English, breaking sometimes into French,—his busy eyes shifting as fast as his talk. Nothing could seem more frank, but I was always reminded of Congreve's distich—

> "'No mask like open talk to cover lies,
> As to go naked is the best disguise.'

"What *is* the use of lying, when truth, well distributed, serves the same purpose ?

"Breakfast was at small tables. The General, Lord and Lady S., White, and self together.

"Immediately after breakfast, Salisbury had

to go to a Cabinet, and Lady S. withdrew, and left us to converse together.

"This first talk was about Elliot—how bad his return would be; how the Turks had played him against Salisbury; how they would still reckon on English help against Russia, if, after all, he went back, etc.; how he had talked to the Turks, in contradiction to S.; which I said I could not believe, but I dare say E.'s honesty let the Turks see he took one line and S. another.

"I thought it was my turn to be frank. 'You know, General, the absurd story they told us at Constantinople. I heard constantly, not from Elliot, but from many persons' (I believe I did from E., but I would not tell him that), 'that you were the real cause of the Bulgarian business, advising the Grand Vizier that there was no insurrection, and that no regular troops were wanted.'

"He was, I think, somewhat taken aback, but said, 'What I did say was, that there was no insurrection worth mentioning; and there were four thousand regular troops in the districts, which could have easily quelled it. Your Bulgarian informant,' he added, 'was one of the Bucharest young men, who, like all conspirators, overestimated their strength. They had not ten thousand, but four thousand, and they knew nothing about fighting. Tchernaieff was a fool to expect Bulgarian aid; he ought to have tried to cut off Bosnia by a junction with Montenegro.'

"At breakfast I had asked him as to Tchernaieff's statement that there were never three thousand Russians in the Servian army. He said four thousand was the highest possible number.

"I said, 'Well, General, I went down with Russian Red Crosses in the Austrian steamer, whom I saw in the Servian uniform at Belgrade the next morning.'

"He laughed, 'Ah! Red Crosses really, but their enthusiasm carried them away when they got to Belgrade.'

"With regard to the conference, he said he was against it at first, thinking that talk without coercion could do no good, but now he thought it had done good, laying the foundation for European action.

"It might have succeeded, however, 'if I and Lord Salisbury had gone together to Midhat, and told him that if he did not give in, the two Grand Dukes would be across the frontier, and the English fleet in the Bosphorus; he would have given in at once.'

"'Yes,' I said, 'but most of us thought, some months ago, that the Turk would give in, if convinced that he would be left alone with Russia.'

"'Yes,' he said, 'but Elliot prevented his thinking this,—the Constantinople Turkophiles told him, "No matter what Lord S. says, three or four months after the war begins, England must help you."'

"We left Hatfield by the 11.20 train, and he, Edmond Fitzmaurice, and I were alone in a compartment. What he said then, had some importance. It was clear the protocol was as good as settled; the sole hitch was the demobilization.

"'We are asked to make a public declaration that we demobilize. We cannot do this without three conditions: (1) Turkey must make peace with Montenegro; (2) Turkey must begin to reform; (3) Turkey must also demobilize, and begin to withdraw her troops in good order. Unless we get these three conditions, we tell the Christians and the Turks and our own people, that we leave the Christians to the tender mercies of the Turks, who will massacre them to a certainty.'

"I said, as to 1, 'Montenegro will make peace, if you wish it.'

"'True,' he said, 'but we cannot ask the Prince to concede more. He has already given up his harbour, and is now only asking for what the conference asked for him.'

"As to 2 and 3, I said, 'You do not expect the Turks to give way.' And, to try him, I added, 'Now you are so peaceful, why do you not begin to demobilize? It must take time; and if Turkey flares up, as you seem to expect, there will still be time for you to interfere before your army gets away.'

"'True,' he said, 'but we cannot publish this

to the world.' He added, 'Your Government will be in an awkward position—your refusal to sign the Berlin memorandum brought on the Servian war; and now, when we are willing to make great concessions to save the peace of Europe, your Government would make them useless by obliging us to leave the Christians to be massacred.'

"I said, 'Very clever of you to have brought it to this.' At which he grinned complacently.

"His letters from Constantinople were, he said, like mine—pointing to anarchy—the Turkish districts in Asia Minor would have a terrible famine if the *redifs* were not soon sent back to cultivate.

"One other remark worth recording. 'It is the interest of you English,' he said, 'to separate the temporal from the Mussulman spiritual power, to have a Mussulman grand pope at Mecca, instead of a Sultan pope at Stamboul.'

"Upon thinking over this conversation, I thought I ought to tell Salisbury what the Russian said would be his case against the Government, so I called and told him. He said he thought it would do good for him to repeat it to Lord Derby. I also told Northcote, whom I came across."

From his Diary.

"*March* 23*rd*.—Met Cardwell at Hartington's at eleven, to talk over Fawcett's notice on Eastern affairs, which after all comes on on Friday.

Thought it very inconvenient. Negotiations on Protocol still proceeding, but likely to fail because our Government wants Russia to promise to demobilize, which she will not do without obtaining conditions from Turkey. House. Fawcett did come on. We agreed Hartington should follow, saying why we do not vote for him, which he did very cleverly. After him, Plunkett, and then Gladstone. Had to leave during his speech to dine with Lady Ely; met Sir Henry Elliot, who, like a thorough gentleman, was quite willing to see me, but very philo-Turk.

"*April 26th.*—House; dined at home. Gladstone showed me resolutions he was bent on proposing on Eastern question. Breakfasted at Goschen's, to meet Nubar Pasha, the late Armenian Minister of the Khedive. Very clever; spoke English well. Hating the Khedive; describing, in most vivid and bitter language, the oppression of the fellahs, and the cruel, selfish weakness of the Pasha; but giving the idea that his aim was English intervention, and so every word he said was an appeal both to our interests and our sympathy."

On the following Monday the terms of Mr. Gladstone's resolutions were stated by himself in the House of Commons. They were as follows:—

"First. That this House finds just cause of dissatisfaction and complaint in the conduct of the

Ottoman Porte with regard to the despatch written by the Earl of Derby on September 21st, 1876, and relating to the massacres in Bulgaria.

"Second. That until such conduct shall have been essentially changed, and guarantees on behalf of the subject populations other than the promises or ostensible measures of the Porte shall have been provided, that Government will be deemed by this House to have lost all claim to receive either the material or the moral support of the British Crown.

"Third. That in the midst of the complications which exist, and the war which has actually begun, this House earnestly desires the influence of the British Crown in the councils of Europe to be employed with a view to the early and effectual development of local liberty and practical self-government in the disturbed provinces of Turkey, by putting an end to the oppression which they now suffer, without the imposition upon them of any other foreign dominion.

"Fourth. That, bearing in mind the wise and honourable policy of this country in the Protocol of April, 1826, and the Treaty of July, 1827, with respect to peace, this House furthermore earnestly desires that the influence of the British Crown may be addressed to promoting the concert of the European Powers in exacting from the Ottoman Porte, by their united authority, such changes in the Government of Turkey as they may deem to

be necessary for the purposes of humanity and justice, for effectual defence against intrigue, and for the peace of the world.

"Fifth. That a humble address, setting forth the prayer of this House, according to the tenour of the foregoing resolutions, be prepared and presented to her Majesty."

The result of Mr. Gladstone's action was something like a split of a serious character among the Liberal leaders. To propose resolutions of this kind at the moment when Russia was about to draw the sword against Turkey, was likely, it was believed, to weaken the peace party within the Cabinet. Forster sympathized to a great extent with Mr. Gladstone; his fear being that this country might be dragged into war on behalf of Turkey. His friends among the Liberal leaders besought him, however, not to vote with Mr. Gladstone, but to support Lord Hartington, who was strongly opposed to the resolutions. Eventually, after an anxious and critical week of discussion, the difficulty was overcome by the acceptance by all parties among the Liberal leaders of a suggestion made by Forster. "About the best day's work I ever did," he remarks in his diary.

This suggestion was that the second resolution should be modified, and the third, fourth, and fifth dropped. All the ex-ministers except Mr. Gladstone were, in the first instance, opposed to this solution of the difficulty; but after some days of

painful suspense they agreed to it, and the crisis in the fortunes of the Liberal party was overcome.

From his Diary.

"*May 7th.*—The news got out in the morning. Called on H—— about twelve. When I got to the House found great excitement, Chamberlain showing about a letter from Gladstone throwing doubt on the agreement. Trevelyan asked his question, and there was a noisy violent wrangle for nearly two hours, which was much lengthened by Gladstone's inability to give a clear answer. However, he did at last say what was agreed, and about seven this wonderful man got up and spoke for two hours and a half—one of his best speeches, ending with an appeal of very great eloquence, looking, indeed, like an inspired man. Cross finished the debate with a very good and moderate speech. I did not dine anywhere. Settled I should not speak tomorrow.

"*May 10th.*—Very busy over speech. Had intended to speak third before dinner, Goschen speaking later; but we found it would not do, the supporters of Gladstone saying they ought to speak. So I was very late, getting up about eleven, after Peel, who had got together a large House to hear one of his eloquent unconnected personal chaffs. It was not easy to bring the tired House back to argument, but after a time I managed it, and spoke for about an hour and a quarter.

"*May* 14*th*.—House. Close of Eastern debate. Good speech by Hartington, followed by a poor speech from Northcote, and an eloquent but warlike speech from Gladstone. Division about two: full House; large majority (for Government), 131.

Later on in the session the House had its first great experience of Irish obstructions.

"*July* 31*st*.—House. South African Bill in committee. Parnell, Biggar, and Co., seven Irish obstructives, began obstruction at one. I felt I must help Government to carry bill. Government thought of dropping all clauses after clause 3. I did not much like this, but told Lowther I would support the Government. However, Government found their men did not like the concession, so when Goldney proposed this plan and Newdegate opposed it, I followed, saying I would support Government if they took on themselves responsibility, but, if not, I would sit indefinitely, and recommend this course, which House cheered, and Northcote assented. After this, obstructionists behaved better until two, when they tried progress. I backed the Government in fighting bill through, and we fought on through the night. Childers first, then Smith, then Selwin-Ibbetson replacing Raikes. The House mustered well, more than one hundred in every division. Relays, acting on previous plan and my public advice, came down in morning. About nine, I went with Northcote to Speaker. We all agreed that we must win, and

suspend the seven, if we could not exhaust them; but Speaker very anxious to avoid suspension. Finally agreed we should not try it till about two. Northcote and I agreed to go away, and meet again in House at half-past one. I went home. Went to bed about ten, to be called at 12.45, but Kensington sent for me at twelve. On coming down I found the seven staggered by fatigue and a threat by Northcote of suspension, but Harcourt very hot for censure or suspension after victory, which would have been very foolish. At length they succumbed, and, about two, the bill got through committee. The House sat till past six, doing other business; the longest session on record. I dined at home, and then went to bed."

During the autumn of 1877, he and Mrs. Forster and their family visited Germany and Bohemia. When at Carlsbad, he met Lord Odo Russell, with whom he had an interesting conversation, which he recorded in his diary:—

"*September* 11*th*.—A very interesting talk for some time. He (Lord Odo Russell) was very frank. Bismarck had wished for a long peace—that is, a real settlement,—and had thought it possible with an alliance, which meant dictation. During the conference he got frightened by possibility of Franco-Russian alliance, and then aimed at war. He was now anti-Turk. The Turks had shocked his moral sense by their mode of carrying on war.

The Emperor was strongly for the Russians; only prevented from joining them by his ministers. Bismarck was really anxious for an English alliance, and very civil, particularly about all second-rate matters—South Africa, etc. Bismarck constantly instigated us to take Egypt on the ground that, until we were at ease about India, we were a constant cause of unsettlement—a 'spoil sport' for Europe. He could not understand why we should not do this now, when two years hence France would be too strong. Odo Russell acknowledged that behind this instigation was the desire to make an alliance between France and us impossible. He admitted that Bismarck lost his head when thinking of France; but they persuaded themselves to believe in danger from France, in order to keep up the army at its full strength."

He returned by way of Berlin.

"*September* 21*st*.—A messenger in the morning from the Crown Princess's chamberlain, to find out whether I was staying and could come to dinner at 7.45. . . . Went down to Wildpark and dined at the palace. The Crown Princess, her eldest daughter, young Prince Meiningen, her betrothed, and the Crown Princess's second son, a boy in naval uniform, sat by the Crown Princess, who was very pleasant—not philo-Turk, but anti-Russian."

The only event of importance which happened during the autumn was his visit to Bristol, where

he made an important speech as the chief guest at the annual celebration of the Colston Festival by the local Liberals. Incidentally he performed one not unimportant piece of work in connection with education in the north of England; for at a meeting held at Leeds, between the representatives of Owen's College, Manchester, and the Yorkshire College, to discuss the name which should be given to the new university with which both these institutions were to be federated, he suggested, as a compromise between the claims of the two counties, that it should be called the Victoria University. The suggestion was accepted, and the Victoria University has since that period actually come into existence. The political situation as winter advanced became exceedingly critical, chiefly in consequence of the national excitement at the advance of the Russian army towards Constantinople. This excitement was intensified by the summons of Parliament for an unusually early date in January, 1878. It was rumoured that Lord Beaconsfield and the majority of his Cabinet were prepared for armed intervention in favour of Turkey, and that Lord Derby and Lord Carnarvon were at issue with their colleagues upon this point.

It was in the first week of January, and in the midst of these alarms and anxieties, that Mr. Forster delivered his annual address to his constituents at Bradford. The address was one that

cost him an unusual amount of labour, and every word in it seemed to have been deeply weighed by the speaker before it was uttered. So far as the foreign question was concerned, his course was clear and consistent. He was resolutely opposed to any action on the part of this country, either diplomatic or otherwise, which might lead Turkey to the conclusion that we would interfere on her behalf provided she kept up her resistance for a sufficient length of time; but now, as in the earlier stages of the struggle, he felt the imperative duty which is laid upon all English statesmen of assisting, so far as may be possible, without violence to their principles, the Government of the day in dealing with the foreign question. He had his own doubts and fears as to the course which ministers were pursuing, but he resolutely refused, in addressing his constituents, to say anything which might add to the popular apprehensions of the hour, and he sought to calm the national susceptibilities by pointing to the fact, so fully verified by the subsequent course of events, that, whatever might happen in Turkey, when the moment came for the settlement of the Eastern question it would be the great powers of Europe, and not merely Russia and Turkey, which would determine the nature of that settlement. In short, at this critical moment there was a real desire on the part of Mr. Forster to stand by the Government, so far as he honestly could do so;

but, at the same time, he recorded the most vigorous protest against any possible action on their part which might have the effect of involving us in a war on the side of Turkey and against Russia.

It was not, however, the foreign question which occupied the most important place in this speech to his constituents. The reader is already aware of the strained nature of Mr. Forster's relations with many of the Nonconformists in his constituency. Although from the first he had refused to join any movement for the disestablishment of the Church, there had long been a belief prevalent in the minds of many of the Radicals of the borough, that in due season he would be found giving his support to the disestablishment party. It has already been shown that in no small degree the bitterness with which he was assailed by the opponents of the education policy had its root in the disappointment felt by those who had entertained this expectation. Mr. Forster was determined now that he would make clear to all, without regard to the consequences, what his position was on the subject of disestablishment, and thus prevent any future disappointment like that which some had felt in consequence of his action on the question of education.

"If I were one of those," he said, "who hold the belief that any connection of the State or the nation with religion must do harm to the cause

of religion, that a State Church is in itself an evil, and that therefore any attempt to uphold it is an attempt to maintain a national evil if not a national sin, then my course would be very clear. I should say, 'Care nothing for either difficulties or consequences; try your best to abolish this evil, and let consequences care for themselves.' But I am not one of those who hold this belief. I was brought up amongst those who do hold it, and who have developed the conviction upon which it is founded to an extent which goes much further than the abolition of a State Church; but I do not myself hold it, although I do think that I can understand and, in a measure, sympathize with the feelings of those who do hold it, and at any rate appreciate their earnestness. But I am obliged to take this question of a State Church as it stands, and to ask myself whether this abolition, or the attempt to abolish it, would do more harm than good, or more good than harm."

After pointing out some of the practical difficulties in the way of disestablishment, he continued: "If I were sure about the consequences of disestablishment I would ask you to help me to meet the difficulties, and would say, Try your best to overcome them. In one short evening I cannot attempt to describe or even to mention all these consequences; they are so many and so various that old England would become new England. Some of them, I doubt not, would be

for good; others, in my opinion, for evil. The chief of these changes," he continued, "would be the destruction of the parochial system. Now, what do I mean by the parochial system? Simply this—that at this moment there is not a place in England, no country parish however remote, no back slum in any city however squalid, in which there is not a minister of religion, a State servant, whose business it is to care for the highest good of every man, woman, and child, in those places. I am not prepared to ask the State to dismiss these servants. And not only is it the business of these ministers of religion thus to care for these parishioners, but these parishioners know that it is their business. There is not a man or a woman amongst them, however poor or degraded, who, when sick or suffering, or beset with the trials of this life, has not a right to go to this parish clergyman and ask him, 'What can you tell me about this better life to come?' I am not prepared to take from these men and women this right; and I am all the less prepared to do so because I know that vast numbers of these dwellers in hovels or cellars go neither to the parish church nor to any church or chapel. I wish them to know, and I wish them to continue to know, that they have a right to ask these ministers of religion, these State servants, for this help, not because they belong to this or that congregation, but because they are Englishmen."

In conclusion he referred to the fact that he had been told that upon what he might say on the relations of Church and State depended the decision of the Bradford Radicals, as to whether they would or would not attempt to prevent his return at the next election. He would only ask of them to consider fairly what he had said; but at the same time he warned them that neither upon this disestablishment question, nor upon any political question, was he one of those who waited to see which side would be strongest.

"If I agreed with the assailants of the Church I would not wait to join them when they are strong; I would join them when they are weak. In every cause with which I have been connected —abolition of slavery, parliamentary reform, education, justice to Ireland, good government of India, our union with our colonies, our friendly relations with America, our duties in Europe— I did not wait for public opinion to be formed; I tried to do my part in forming it. I have been told, and not unkindly told, that there are two sets of politicians—politicians who administrate and politicians who think and oblige these administrators to carry out their thoughts; and that the first-mentioned class are the practical politicians, and that I belong to this class, and that, therefore, I need not be so careful about my thoughts nor so careful about my opinion. Well, I do aspire to be a practical politician, but my defini-

tion of a practical politician is not that of a man who servilely does what other men think ought to be done, but who considers what ought to be done, and, having made up his mind, tries to do it, and who, if he knows a thing ought not to be done, refuses to do it."

His outspoken speech produced a good effect. It had been, as he described it in his diary, "The heaviest bit of talking work he ever had;" but it was received with favour by almost all who heard it, and even those who differed from him showed that they respected his candour.

"Wharfeside, Burley-in-Wharfedale, Leeds,
"January 8th, 1878.

"My dear Pulszky,

"I found your note on my return home, on Saturday evening, from my meeting with my constituents. Had I received it a few hours earlier I should have been tempted—concealing, of course, not only your name but your country—to quote the first paragraph of wondering inquiry as to what England could mean, as proof of the manner in which our Government has succeeded in mystifying Europe.

"Lord Carnarvon's speech, a day or two after you wrote your letter, would rather tend to clear up matters; but I fear the poor Turks have not been altogether undeceived. The explanation I believe to be that there really has been a great

contest as to policy in the Cabinet between Lord Beaconsfield and two or three not very important supporters, and Lord Salisbury with two or three other of his strongest colleagues; Lord Derby, who, though very sensible, is not a strong man, lately siding with Salisbury and Co.

"All this is very provoking and misleading for you, and somewhat humiliating for us, but, after all, vastly better in our opinion than a united Cabinet in support of Lord Beaconsfield's *recklessness*.

"When I say I *believe* in this contest of opinion, I do not *know* it. I only guess it from all the public evidence I can collect. But the important matter for you and for us is what the Government will really do. Well, I believe peace and Lord Salisbury will prevail. I think there was real danger a week or so ago that Beaconsfield might venture to be reckless; but the overpowering feeling of the country in favour of neutrality is now clearly showing itself. At any rate I think *your* war party will only rely on a broken reed if they hope for real aid from *our* war party.

"I expect our Government will meet Parliament with an apparently united Cabinet, declaring that they always have been united, meaning only to secure Constantinople from becoming Russian, etc., and making a great merit of protecting British interests, which have never really been threatened. In this I may be wrong; but if Beaconsfield gets

the upper hand and really tries to involve us in war, I think the Cabinet will split, that the country will rise up against him, and that he would quickly be displaced. When I spoke I thought the real practical danger was that our Government would oppose direct negotiations between the Porte and Russia; but my fear on that account is much less after what I see in the papers to-day and yesterday.

"The London papers have given good reports of my speech, especially the *Daily News*, but I send a local report, in order that you may compare my constituency with your own. The room was crammed to fainting—about 4600 persons—almost all men agreeing with me enthusiastically and unanimously about the war, though more than half of them differing in opinion from me about the Church. So much for our affairs. I can well understand the difficulties of Count Andrássy and of your Government, and I am grieved to think that the uncertain mysterious action of our Government should aggravate their difficulties.

"Yours very truly,

"W. E. FORSTER."

Parliament met on January 17th, public opinion being then at its highest state of tension, owing to the advance of the Russian forces towards their coveted goal on the Bosphorus.

To his Wife.

"80, Eccleston Square, January 17th, 1878.

"Thou wilt have seen the speech before this reaches thee. It bears evident marks of compromise, and the important paragraph beginning, 'Hitherto,'* is ambiguous; but I think on the whole the peace party have prevailed. If it had not been for the persistent resistance of the three peers, Salisbury, Derby, and Carnarvon, backed by the quick Russian successes, I think Beaconsfield would have landed us in war. I made a long call on Hartington yesterday morning, to talk over his speech with him, and found we agreed. We had a full dinner at Devonshire House. Gladstone in full force and spirits."

"Athenæum Club, January 23rd, 1878.

"Much excitement and tension here about Cabinet suddenly summoned, and, it is supposed, to consider the Russian terms. I wish with all my heart it may be so, for there is an angry suspicion taking hold of people that Russia is playing with us. Of course the soldiers will get as far they can until the armistice is signed."

* "Hitherto, so far as the war has proceeded, neither of the belligerents has infringed the conditions on which my neutrality is founded. . . . But I cannot conceal from myself that should hostilities be unfortunately prolonged, some unexpected occurrence may render it incumbent on me to adopt measures of precaution."

The change of feeling which is perceptible in the extract last given affected Forster as well as the majority of his fellow-countrymen. He had been one of those who were disposed to go to great lengths in trusting Russia, as long as there was no manifest breach of faith on her part; but when appearances seemed to indicate that her promise not to occupy Constantinople was being broken, and when the Russian advance continued after the Turks had sued for peace, that angry feeling of suspicion of which he speaks took possession of every breast, and led eventually to one of the most dramatic episodes in the political history of the time.

On the very day on which this letter to his wife was written, the Cabinet had finally decided to send the fleet through the Dardanelles, and, in consequence, Lord Derby and Lord Carnarvon had tendered their resignation to the Queen. Lord Derby's resignation was not made known, as he was induced to withdraw it. Turkey had sued for peace, and it was hoped that the Russian advance would be stayed. It was known, however, that the Czar was treating directly with the Sultan for the conditions of peace, and the excitement and agitation in this country were intense.

Ministers came forward with a demand for a large supplemental vote, in order that they might strengthen the army and navy in such a manner as to enable them, if necessary, to resist by force the

conditions imposed by Russia upon her vanquished adversary. Mr. Forster, with the concurrence of most of the Liberal leaders (Lord Hartington being, however, opposed to any action), was put forward to move an amendment to the resolution of the Chancellor of the Exchequer authorizing the supplemental estimate. His action, first in moving this resolution, and subsequently in withdrawing it under very dramatic circumstances, was at the time severely censured by certain members of the Liberal party, and it is therefore necessary that the story of those days of turmoil and agitation at the end of January and the beginning of February, when all Europe believed that the fate of Constantinople was hanging in the balance, should be told with some degree of fulness, as it is recited in his own diary.

"*January* 30*th*, *Wednesday*.—Was very hard at work with my speech. Terribly difficult job.

"*January* 31*st*.—Dictated speech to Florence. Sent for Childers, to whom I read it. A crammed House, and very anxious speech. Up before five. Spoke an hour and twenty-one minutes, saying what I wanted. House flat; our side not forgiving Hartington's absence, but on the whole a success —in one respect a great success—Hartington saying, when I sat down, that he agreed with every word, warmly thanking me. General approval on our bench; very difficult, owing to not knowing whether armistice had been declared."

The amendment was in the following words:—"That this House, having been informed in her Majesty's gracious speech that the condition on which her Majesty's neutrality is founded has not been infringed by either of the belligerents engaged in the war in the east of Europe, and having since received no information sufficient to justify a departure from the policy of neutrality and peace, sees no reason for adding to the burden of the people by voting unnecessary supplies."

Diary.

"*February* 1*st.*—Debate continued. News at beginning that armistice was to have been signed yesterday. Peel replied to Trevelyan, pitching, of course, into me.

"*February* 3*rd.*—Called on Hartington with note as to line I should take on the probable cessation of hostilities; found we very much agreed.

"*February* 4*th.*—Debate continued. Dined at Grillion's. Sat opposite to Cross. Very well to break the ice after his speech. Lord Fortescue there, who had resigned chairmanship of North Devon Liberal Association by reason of my speech.

"*February* 6*th.*—Went to Mrs. Brand's. Found great excitement, the Government having heard from Layard that the Russians were marching on Constantinople. Doubts whether hostilely or in collusion with the Turks; but in either case great

anger excited here; the anti-Russian feeling very strong.

"*February 7th.*—Called on Hartington. Granville came, and Frederick Cavendish, who had seen Gladstone in bed. We decided amendment must be withdrawn, but the question, How? Whether after pressure or by me at once? We agreed best for me at once, if Gladstone assented; but I made his consent a condition of my initiative. Granville and Frederick Cavendish went up to him, and we summoned caucus at Granville's at three. Gladstone and Bright came. We all agreed I should withdraw after Northcote's answer to Hartington, and fixed the exact words of withdrawal, implying no further opposition to Speaker leaving the chair. This I did, the Tories jeering less than might have been expected. Debate whether I should be allowed to withdraw, and while Bright speaking news that Derby had read a Russian contradiction in the Lords, which Northcote soon read in the Commons. Very dramatic. However, I declined to accept Fawcett's suggestion that I should put my amendment back, and before dinner it was withdrawn by assent."

The statement to which this opportune contradiction had been furnished by the Russian ambassador, Count Schouvaloff, was to the effect that the Russian army was already inside Constantinople. It was this rumour, and the statement made on behalf of the Cabinet that they

were unable to reconcile their reports from Constantinople with the declaration of the Grand Duke Nicholas that hostilities had ceased, which caused the Liberal leaders to withdraw the amendment moved by Mr. Forster. No doubt, if they could have foreseen the opportune contradiction given by the Russian Government to the current rumours they would not have come to this decision, but would have persisted in pressing their amendment. They were compelled, however, to determine their course of action in view of the facts which were actually in their possession, and it cannot be doubted that their decision was a wise and patriotic one. But that large class in society which rejoices in being wise after the event was bitter in denouncing the withdrawal of the amendment when the nation had been reassured by the Russian contradiction, and it was upon Mr. Forster that the whole of the responsibility for that incident was laid. Again and again in subsequent years, when men were endeavouring to bolster up their charges against him of disloyalty to his party, this transaction was alluded to, and it was declared that he alone was responsible for the sudden and dramatic change of front on the part of the Opposition at the moment when the country was excited by the rumoured occupation of Constantinople. I have given the truth as it was told in Forster's own diary on the very day on which the event occurred, and it will be seen that in taking

this course he acted not merely with the concurrence of the official leader of the party, Lord Hartington, but of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright. Never, it is clear, was a more unfounded charge brought against any man than that which was so repeatedly urged against him in connection with this exciting incident in the political history of the time. The following letter, which he addressed to Mr. Byles, of the *Bradford Observer*, dealt with the criticisms upon his action to which Mr. Forster was at that time subjected among unfriendly Liberals in the constituency he represented:—

"80, Eccleston Square, S.W., February 12th, 1878.

"DEAR MR. BYLES,

"Excuse my dictating a note to you. I fear I must allow misconception to continue to exist in regard to my course in concert with Lord Hartington and others last week, as matters are too critical to allow of any further public personal explanation beyond my speech on Friday; but I should like, if possible, to satisfy you.

"I never had a more disagreeable, though at the same time a plainer, duty than withdrawing my amendment. It was so clear that persevering with it would endanger peace by stimulating the war cry in the House and in the country, by identifying some members of the Government with the war party, and thus weakening Lord Derby, that this withdrawal was the unanimous decision

of a large meeting of members of the late Government, including Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright. The words which I used in withdrawing the amendment were carefully drawn up at this meeting, and purposely included the withdrawal of further opposition to the Speaker leaving the chair, and therefore bound all present at that meeting not to vote in the division on Thursday. Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright concurred in these words. Then came Gortschakoff's contradiction to Layard, and before the evening closed it was evident that this contradiction was more apparent than real; and, in fact, the deep irritation in the country and in the House arises from the fact that the Russians have, as it were, stolen a march and forced the Turkish plenipotentiary to assent to an armistice which left Constantinople defenceless, and, indeed, implied its *military* occupation. Compare this fact with Mr. Gladstone's assurance in his speech on Monday week, rash as I thought it at the time, that the Russians would not think of occupying Constantinople, and you may judge of the effect and the surprise. So much for Thursday. Now as to Friday. Hartington and myself, with others of our late colleagues, thought that, whatever argument applied to the withdrawal of the amendment applied to abstaining from active opposition to the vote, unless the Government were, in the debate in Committee, to give us fresh grounds for opposition. On the contrary, North-

cote took from me my chief ground of opposition by disavowing all intention to make use of any influence gained by the vote to minimize at the conference the terms for the Christians. I felt, therefore, that there was less ground for my voting on Friday than there was on Thursday. There remained, however, all the financial objections. Mr. Gladstone thought that they obliged him not merely to protest, but to vote. We, on the contrary, thought that we ought to be content with our protest, and not to weaken the Government in Europe by a full party division, or weaken the Liberal party in the country by enabling the Government to charge them with personal opposition at a crisis of danger.

"I believed we were right on Friday. I am still more sure of it now. If we were still in the field, the Government would try to throw upon us the difficulties of their position; as it is, they must face these difficulties, and it is well, both for the cause of peace and for the interests of England, that they should do so. Affairs are very critical, and it is only by assuring the Government, and especially Lord Derby, of support, that we can enable them to keep calm and prevent them being carried away by the fire-eaters of their own party.

"Of course you cannot publish this letter; but you can, if you like, show it to your son, and confidentially to any one else you think proper.

"Yours very truly,

"W. E. FORSTER.

"P.S.—It must not be forgotten that Lord Beaconsfield would seize upon an opportunity of dissolution; and I suspect would, south of the Trent, at any rate in the present excitement, greatly gain. The Westminster registration agent, coming this morning for the subscription to his association, says that he does not think there would be a Liberal returned in London. This fire will soon burn out; but it is not for us to add fuel to the flames."

On the night following the withdrawal of the amendment, Mr. Fawcett made a bitter attack upon Mr. Forster, to which the latter replied, though the critical circumstances of the moment compelled him to use very guarded language. The rank and file of the Opposition maintained their active hostility to the vote; but Lord Hartington and Mr. Forster felt themselves bound by the declaration which the latter had made in withdrawing the amendment to refuse to go into the division lobby against the Government.

To MR. PULSZKY.

"80, Eccleston Square, London, S.W.,
"March 11th, 1878.

"MY DEAR PULSZKY,

"How much has happened since my last letter to you in reply to yours of the last day of 1877!

"I have often wished to talk to you, but events

have changed so quickly from day to day that writing seemed useless. Now, however, there is a comparative lull until either the Congress meets or is indefinitely postponed. For ourselves we had a real war scare for a time, the war party greatly aided by the Russian reticence, to use a mild term. You see, we were given to understand that Constantinople would not be occupied except for strategical grounds, and these grounds disappeared when Turkey declared her willingness to accept the Russian terms, so no wonder at the effect of the discovery that the armistice involved the potential occupation of Constantinople, by the withdrawal of the Turks from the lines they were well able to defend. One immediate effect was that I and many others withdrew our opposition to the vote of credit, partly because we thought under the circumstances the Government, *quâ* Government, required support, and partly because any further opposition would have endangered peace by more and more identifying the Government with the war party. We thought it better to throw the whole responsibility on the Government, and events have justified our action, Lord Derby and common sense having recovered, apparently, the ascendency in the Cabinet. Now that there is no fighting to help Turkey, the present danger of war is passed; but we are all of us face to face with a hard job, that of replacing the Porte in Europe.

"To my mind the Turk in Europe is worse than dead. He merely lives as Russia's vassal and agent; but upon that point I should like your opinion. There are still those in England who think that Turkey, with Constantinople defended by the Straits and the lines to its west, and fed by Asia Minor, will again be a real power; but surely this is a mistake? The disease of corruption and misgovernment and effete incapacity will only be more virulent from being the more concentrated. I take it now for granted that *you* will accept Bosnia and Herzegovina; but I suppose you are waiting to be asked not only by the beys and the Catholics, but by the Congress.

"I suppose the annexation to Greece of Thessaly and Epirus is only a question of time; but I confess I am puzzled by the unwillingness of your Government to let Russia get to the Danube. Upon the whole I am hopeful of the result of the war, ghastly and destructive as it has been. I write in haste.

"Yours very truly,

"W. E. FORSTER."

To his Wife.

"80, Eccleston Square,

"Sunday evening, March 24th.

"Thy telegram, my dearest, arrived just as we were going to dinner, and delighted we were to get it. I was quite anxious, the day was so drearily

cold. . . . This morning Flo and I went to Vere Street to hear Dr. Coghlan. I was much struck and pleased. I expected, I know not why, a flowery address; on the contrary, very able, very good, but no tickling, and quite a small congregation. We walked back in the bitter wind, and this afternoon I made no end of calls. . . . An unusual gathering at Lady Waldegrave's, Schouvaloff and Lyons, etc. After Schouvaloff left, I said I supposed the real hitch about the Congress was not the mere question how the articles should be considered, but a larger question: Whether the European settlement of 1856 was to be replaced by another European Settlement, or by a treaty between Russia and Turkey permitted by Europe? Almost everybody dissented, but Lord Lyons said nothing. I went away with him, and in the street he said, 'The real point is the one you put.' As yet Russia is said to stand stiff, but she is expected to yield. Gladstone's speech will not make her more likely to yield."

On March 28th Lord Derby finally resigned his post as Foreign Secretary, in consequence of the warlike policy of Lord Beaconsfield and the rest of the Cabinet, evinced by their determination to call out the reserves, and to take other steps of a menacing character. Public feeling again rose to a fever height of excitement.

To his Wife.

"Athenæum Club, March 30th.

". . . I am just come from a long talk with Hartington. I have told him, with entire truth, that never was I so bothered with any public affair since I have been a politician—what with the conviction that we ought to protest against a wicked purposeless war on the one hand, and on the other hand with the fear of fanning the war fever by appearing to weaken the Government when the country is in danger, and 'country before party' won the Worcester election. Nevertheless, twenty years hence, if we do go to war, these disputes about the congress will be lost sight of, as now are the disputes about the holy places before the Crimean war. The verdict of history will be against the reckless, foolish people who went to war for nothing. We must take care they do not add a fruitless, half-hearted wavering Opposition in their condemnation. The Tory papers and partizans are doing their best to minimize the action of the Government, and to declare it means peace. Of course, being a game of brag, it may succeed; but the fear is that the Russians are nearly as hot-headed as ourselves, and what may not be feared when we have the Prime Minister justifying warlike measures by talking about the balance of power in the Mediterranean and the freedom of Europe?"

"House of Commons, Tuesday, April 2nd.

"Again, my dearest, my note must be very short. . . . There was an Irish row last night, and I was dragged into it on the Sunday Closing Bill, and I went on dividing against obstructionist publicans till five, Gladstone staying half an hour after me. We are still in doubt what actual course to take with the great vote, which begins on Monday—whether to move an amendment or not. If we could get a real debate without an amendment, it would be the best. Salisbury's despatch is very able, and it points to the real question. Since we cannot modify the treaty by diplomacy, shall we do so by war? I do not wish to be forced to answer this question, but if forced I say—No. I do not, however, wish to answer the question, because 'No' may encourage Russia to refuse the concessions she ought to make."

"House of Commons, Wednesday, April 3rd.

"I write, my dearest, from the table of the House, and can only say a few words. The Vaccination Debate has now been coming on for some time. I have had to speak and dine, and must now watch the debate with the possibility of having to speak again, and I must be at Exeter Hall at my Wesleyan meeting at six, and ought to be there a few minutes earlier. It brings up very early associations going to Exeter Hall, where I used as a child to attend anti-slavery meetings with my aunts."

"Athenæum Club, April 8th, 1878.

". . . As for plans, I should much wish to come down, but I fear I cannot, as I might have to speak on Thursday, and, at any rate, must watch my opportunity.

"My position is one of great difficulty, but if not complex, rather of simple difficulty—between fear of letting the country get committed to a war policy without a protest, and fear of encouraging Russia not to concede.

"If, therefore, this debate be not the closing debate, if the Government deprecate discussion on the ground of negotiations, I may be quiet, but I hardly think I can. . . .

"I am now come from a long and very satisfactory chat with Hartington. He read me a rough sketch of his probable speech, and, to my surprise, I found we practically agreed. He will oppose any attempt by England alone to modify the treaty by war in case of negotiations failing, or, indeed, any but European action, and therefore he will oppose action by only Austria and England."

It is unnecessary to pursue the history of this exciting time, for it is rather the story of European politics than that of Mr. Forster's life which would need to be told if I were to do so. Enough has been said, however, to show what was the policy which Forster favoured, and what were the

means by which he sought to carry it into effect. He was resolute in his opposition to any plans which seemed likely to increase the danger of our being involved in what he regarded as a wicked and useless war; but he saw, more clearly than some of his contemporaries did, that direct opposition to the Government at every stage was not the method by which that danger could best be avoided. He refused, accordingly, to comply with the wishes of those who were more anxious to maintain an unceasing warfare against ministers than to enable England, which was for the moment in the hands of Lord Beaconsfield, to pass successfully through this stormy crisis in her fate. Whether he was right or wrong in maintaining this attitude it is for the country at large to judge.

CHAPTER V.

THE CAUCUS.

During the Easter recess of 1878 Mr. and Mrs. Forster paid a short visit to Pau. Whilst there Forster met with a somewhat serious accident. He was thrown from a carriage and broke his leg. He had to remain some time at Pau, and then, having had the injured limb encased in plaster of Paris, he was brought home, reaching London on May 13th. It is characteristic of his indomitable energy that, very soon after his return, and when still completely crippled, he went to the Athenæum in order to vote at an election in which he was interested.

"I climbed up the stairs on my back," he records in his diary, "and voted, and then had a rubber."

On the 23rd he reappeared in the House after his accident. "Was cheered as I hobbled in, and Northcote and many others kindly asked after me. I spoke a little after ten. Well received. I spoke thirty-five minutes with lame leg on a knee-rest

crutch. Quite at ease, and my voice quite as good as ever."

In the summer the storm of anger against him among the Bradford Radicals broke out afresh, and in a new and virulent form. The bitterness of the election of 1874 had never been forgotten, and it had been stirred into new life by the censures which had been passed upon him in connection with the withdrawal of his amendment to the supplemental estimate by those who were ignorant of the fact that he had acted upon that occasion as the instrument and the mouthpiece of the whole of the leaders of the party.

The battle which he was now called upon to wage, and in which he was destined to win a complete victory, though it was not obtained without much exertion and many sacrifices, was one directed against a determined attempt on the part of the Liberal caucus of Bradford to compel the distinguished representative of the town to place himself absolutely at its mercy. The Bradford Liberal Association had been reconstructed, after the general election of 1874, upon the Birmingham plan. Its members were elected at public meetings held in the different wards of the town, and it was assumed that they faithfully represented all sections of the Liberal party in the constituency. Theoretically, there can be no doubt that Liberal organization upon this basis approaches to something like perfection,

so far as its representative character is concerned; but, as a matter of fact, experience shows that the result of the elections of associations of this description is to place power almost entirely in the hands of a small body of active men, for the most part holding extreme views on political questions. Mr. Forster, at all events, believed this to be the case, and it cannot be said that he looked with any particular degree of favour upon the substitution of the caucus for the somewhat elastic form of organization which had hitherto prevailed in Bradford as well as in most other English constituencies.

He himself, as the reader knows, had fought the election of 1874 chiefly by the strength of his own hand. The Liberal organization of that year, such as it was, had done its utmost to secure his defeat, and had conducted its opposition to him with as much bitterness as though he had been a pronounced Tory instead of being, as he was, an advanced Liberal. It was not in human nature for any man to forget this fact when he was approached by those who claimed to be the successors of the old organization, and was asked to recognize them as the spokesmen of the whole Liberal party in Bradford. Mr. Forster had then represented the borough for a period of nearly eighteen years, and his relations with the majority of his constituents were of a peculiarly warm and friendly character. The Bradford Liberal Association had adopted a rule by which it required

every candidate in the Liberal interest for the representation of the borough to submit himself, not to the constituency as a whole, but to the caucus, and to abide by the verdict of that body upon his claim to represent the town. Much might be urged in favour of such a rule when applied to unknown candidates seeking election for the first time, but it is difficult to find a single argument in its favour when the intention was to apply it, not to a new candidate, but to one who was actually the sitting member for the borough, and who had represented it in the House of Commons for not far short of twenty years. Yet this was what the members of the Bradford caucus sought to do when Mr. Forster was asked to give them an assurance, in view of the next general election, that he would submit his name to the association in the first place, and allow that body to decide whether he should or should not again become the candidate for the representation of Bradford.

He absolutely declined to comply with this request. Mr. Alfred Illingworth, subsequently one of the representatives of Bradford in the House of Commons, and at that time a very influential member of the Liberal party in the town, communicated the wish of the association to Mr. Forster, and stated at the same time that, if Mr. Forster accepted the rule binding him to place himself in the hands of the association, he would be happy to

propose him as one of the Liberal candidates at the next election. In his reply Mr. Forster said, "I am much obliged to you for your kind proposal to submit my name to the committee of the Liberal Association, but in doing so you refer me to its fifteenth rule, which requires the proposer of any candidate to give such candidate's assurance that he will abide by the decision of the association. I am sorry to say that I cannot give this assurance, and I think my reason for declining to do so can hardly be misunderstood. I am perfectly aware that my name, proposed by you, and supported not only by those who have always voted for me, but also by those who act with you, would, as you say, in all probability be accepted by the committee; but I cannot bind myself to a rule which even theoretically enables any association to stand between me and the constituency I have so long represented. Do not suppose that I forget the necessity of organization or underrate the importance of the Liberal Association, or that I question its right to exercise that influence over the representation of the borough which is due to the member as well as to the individual earnestness and sincerity of its members. Nor need I say that I should give any resolution to which the committee might come my most respectful consideration. But I cannot forget that I am member for the borough, and I cannot think it right to make myself the nominee or delegate of any association

within the constituency, however important that organization, or however I may agree with it in political opinion. It is not for me to question the rule which the members of the association have thought it right to frame, but I may mention that I have not been able to find any such rule in other similar organizations. I have by me the Birmingham rules, where it certainly does not exist. I cannot but hope that my being unable, for the reason above stated, to comply with the condition of this rule may not prevent that union of the party which must, after all, be the object of the association, and which would, I feel sure, restore to Bradford its old position as a Liberal borough."

Mr. Illingworth, on behalf of the association, continued to press him to yield the point in dispute by agreeing to submit himself absolutely to that body. Mr. Forster replied to Mr. Illingworth's second letter, pointing out the difference between a new candidate and a sitting member. The latter, he contended, had a right to consider himself, and his constituents had a right to consider him, a candidate for re-election; but the rule of the association demanded that he should bind himself beforehand to withdraw at the bidding of a majority, however narrow, of a committee.

"It is possible," he said, "that the member might be able to persuade not merely the majority of the constituency, but the majority of his party, that he is right; and yet the condition to which

this rule would have bound him would prevent him from appealing to his constituents or to his party, or even to the second thoughts of the committee. I say nothing of my own personal position, and pass over any claim I may have for long service; but I cannot but think that compliance with such a condition would be intolerable to the self-respect of any politician who rightly regards political duty, and that if such a rule became general it would greatly injure the political life of the country. Imagine a wave of prejudice overwhelming the constituency, as, for instance, at the time of the Crimean war, would it be desirable that the Cobdens and Brights and Milner Gibsons of the future should be bound not to offer themselves for re-election, and should be forced to hold their tongues and submit to ostracism in silence, because they had undertaken not to stand if the majority of a committee disagreed with them?"

The correspondence was published, and excited not a little indignation among those Liberals who thought more of the services rendered by Mr. Forster to his country, and of the independence of Members of Parliament, than of the success of the caucus system of organization. Even those, however, who were most strongly in favour of this particular system were not prepared to support the action of the members of the Bradford Association. It need hardly be said that amongst the leaders of the Liberal party there was a unanimous feeling in

favour of Mr. Forster, so far as his dispute with the association was concerned. Mr. Gladstone, who had spoken strongly in favour of the new method of organizing the party, held just as strongly that the special rule of which Mr. Forster complained in the Bradford constitution was wrong, and he proffered his services for the purpose of putting an end to the dispute.

To MR. GLADSTONE.

"Fox Ghyll, Ambleside, September 2nd, 1878.

"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"Thank you very much for your note. I wish with all my heart I could suggest some way by which you could deliver yourself on the organization question, as I think the advocates of some such rule as the Bradford one have a lurking hope that you are on their side. The Birmingham people disavow this rule; but I am not quite sure that I have as much faith as you have even in the Birmingham system, mainly for this reason: that I doubt any permanent committee, or any committee annually elected in quiet times, thoroughly representing the party when an election is imminent. Birmingham itself may be an exception, political interest, not to say excitement, there being both strong and abiding; but generally I suspect that the men who elect the committees are themselves but a small part of the party. And is not this likely to happen—Either that, being thus small, they would degenerate into wire-pullers,

as in the States; or, as in Bradford, represent the agitation for disestablishment, or some such special question? In either case there is a chance of the committee being disavowed by the party when the election really comes. The committee say, 'What a shame! We are the real workers, and so ought to be allowed to choose.' 'Who asked you to work? We do not trouble about the election every year or every day in the year, but that does not mean that we do not consider that we have as much to do with our member as you have.' I, therefore, rather prefer the old system in our towns; namely, a permanent committee to look after the registration, but a choice of candidates by the whole party just before the election. It seems to me that one of the best safeguards against the wire-pullers—that is, against the real danger besetting large constituencies—is so to frame the machinery as to keep members as much as possible in communication and contact with the whole constituency, and candidates as much as possible with the whole party. Just one word about myself. Illingworth, in one of his letters, says that until the last election I had acknowledged the right of the Electoral Association, then the Registration Committee, to decide whether or no I should be a candidate. This is an entire mistake. I did not even know that such a right was claimed.

"Yours very sincerely,

"W. E. FORSTER."

The members of the Bradford Liberal Association were themselves hardly prepared for the storm of disapproval which was caused by their attempt to bring their old member into subjection to them. Especially were they unprepared for the fact that much of this disapproval came from those upon whose support they had most confidently reckoned. Mr. Forster, on the other hand, received from men of all parties the warmest thanks for the action he had taken in thus asserting the right of sitting members to deal directly with their constituents, and not to sacrifice their personal independence as the representatives of their fellow-countrymen by becoming the mere tools of any association or committee. No decision was come to, as neither party to the conflict would give way; but as to the fact of Mr. Foster's triumph there was nowhere any question.

To MRS. CHARLES FOX.

"Fox Ghyll, Ambleside, September 15th, 1878.

"Thy loving note, my dearest Aunt Charles, has been in my pocket almost ever since I received it—a constant pleasure to me. I hardly like, however, troubling thee with a letter; but do not think it needful to reply. I know writing is wearisome to thee, and I also know I am not forgotten.

"I went up Colwith Brow yesterday, not by those old lodgings of yours, but very near them.

What a crowd of memories rush in!—mournful many of them, and yet some of them very pleasant, and the bright, pure figure of thy dear husband standing out clearly, pointing upward *then—now* beckoning to us.

"My wife and the girls and I have been snugly ensconced here for more than a fortnight, and I do so love this country. I wish we could stay on; but on Tuesday I must be off to Aberdeen, taking Jane and Florence with me, to say good-bye to my Lord Rectorship duties; and then after a visit or two in Scotland, we return to Yorkshire by Ireland, spending a few days with Lord Emly near Limerick, and I intend to revisit the places in Connemara I saw with my father during the famine. . . . Thou asked me about my leg. It is well—proof thereof, I walked up Fawfield yesterday week; but I am getting sadly fat and stiff and prosy, as this letter shows. . . .

"Thy very affectionate

"W. E. Forster."

To Mr. Thomas Cooper.

"Stranraer, N.B., September 29th, 1878.

". . . I, like you, am very melancholy about public affairs; but I cannot think the present *régime* will last. If I thought so I should be as hopeless as you; but I think I see some symptoms of common sense, and feelings of duty regaining their ascendency. I am sure my disgust and

indignation at Beaconsfield is not a party feeling. I disapprove and often disagree with the Tories, but my feeling towards him is altogether different.

"Your ever affectionate

"W. E. FORSTER."

The autumn brought many perplexities and anxieties in connection with public affairs. Although the Berlin treaty had been concluded, there were still troubles in the south-east of Europe, whilst Afghanistan, with the Ameer of which we were now at war, had become the burning question in Eastern politics. Writing to the Duchess of Manchester regarding events in Turkey, and the announcement of Lord Beaconsfield at the Guildhall banquet, that England would maintain the treaty in spirit and in letter, he said (November 12th)—

"Upon one matter I do not fully see my way. Disraeli's high-handed action is sure to make a strong popular demand for depriving the executive —nominally the Crown, really the Premier—of the war-declaring and treaty-making power, and we shall all of us have to consider how we can meet this demand. Without doubt, to grant it might at times be inconvenient. On the other hand, to strain prerogative, as has been done, is very dangerous, and would as a rule be undesirable. This is one of the cases in which his reckless conduct is ensuring a great reaction, which, if it

does not come in my time or the Queen's, may, I fear, come in the Prince's time. Another reaction I expect very soon. You know I have always thought Gladstone and Lowe too docile scholars of the old Manchester school. I always contended against their disparagement of the colonies and of India as wrong in itself and sure to become unpopular. But now Disraeli is, as regards India, going much too far in the other direction. Nothing will be more unpopular than the notion that we are an Eastern rather than a Western power; that the centre of gravity is to be shifted from London to Delhi, and that we are to let the British bark be towed behind an Indian ship. I expect to *have to contend against* a strong desire to cut the cable and get rid of the dependency."

The outbreak of the war between this country and the Ameer of Afghanistan was one of the events which occupied much of the attention of the public during the autumn and winter of 1878. Forster strongly condemned the steps which brought about our interference in the affairs of Afghanistan. In January, 1879, he made his customary speech to his constituents at Bradford, and no passages in that speech were more emphatic than those in which he condemned the policy of the Government and of Lord Lytton, then Viceroy of India. Yet it is to be observed that, even when condemning most severely the steps taken by the Government, he did not follow the lines of many

members of the Liberal party who advocated the immediate withdrawal by us from the country which had, owing to our action, been plunged into anarchy. However reprehensible might be the policy which had caused Afghanistan to be reduced to this state, and however anxious the majority of the English public might be to dissociate themselves from all connection with that policy, Forster recognized the fact that the nation, by the action of its ministers, had incurred responsibilities from which it could not free itself. It might be that we had sinned greatly in meddling with Afghanistan at all; but, having meddled with it, we were bound to see that order was restored before we again ceased to interfere in the affairs of the country. This was not the line which at the moment found favour with the most strenuous opponents of the Government, and Forster was called to task for having thus indirectly given what appeared to be some measure of countenance to the proceeding of Lord Beaconsfield.

His relations with the Bradford Association had not improved at the time when he appeared before his constituents, and the meeting at which he delivered his annual address was a somewhat disorderly one; though, as usual, after the first ebullition of feeling on the part of those who were displeased with his action regarding the caucus, he had a fair hearing from all, being in this respect much more fortunate than his chair-

man, who was not listened to at all. The Bradford Liberals, however, were sincerely anxious, if they could, to come to a settlement of their dispute with their representative. A gentleman empowered to act on behalf of the local association asked Mr. Forster whether, if a special exception were made in his case, and the rule requiring candidates to submit themselves absolutely to the decision of the caucus was suspended so far as he was concerned, he would be willing to join the association.

If, as some persons alleged at the time, he had been thinking of nothing but a personal triumph for himself, this solution of the difficulty would certainly have met his views, for it would have enabled him to achieve a distinct personal triumph of no ordinary kind. But Forster looked upon himself as being in the matter merely the representative of a large body of his fellow-countrymen. It was not for personal freedom from the rule of the wire-pullers that he was contending, but for the general independence of members of Parliament who had already secured the confidence of their constituents, and whose freedom of action would be greatly fettered if the obnoxious rule of the Bradford Association were to be generally enforced. He replied, therefore, to the overtures made to him on behalf of the association, that so long as their rule was in existence it was impossible for him to join their body. In

November, 1879, the dispute was satisfactorily ended by a unanimous vote of the association agreeing to make the rule permissive in its character, by changing the word "shall" into "may." When the members of the association had thus surrendered the point at issue, Mr. Forster at once joined the association, and worked amicably with it in preparing for the general election, which was then approaching. On May 29th he received a deputation from the association, who invited him to become a candidate, on behalf of the Liberal party for the borough, Mr. Illingworth being his colleague. "I gave them a grateful, civil answer, but not detracting from my rights; so ends that controversy."

The spring of 1879 had added another to the many burdens which the English Government at that time had to bear. This was the outbreak of war in South Africa, occasioned by our attack upon the Zulu king, Cetewayo. The earliest incidents of that war, the terrible disaster of Isandhlwana, and the splendid defence of Rorke's Drift, made a great impression in this country, and for the moment turned all our thoughts from other questions. Forster was in thorough agreement with his colleagues in opposing both the policy which had brought about this most unhappy war and the weakness shown by ministers in dealing with it, and both in the House and in the country he was one of the most powerful assailants of the

Government. His views upon the South African question, however, were not altogether those of the majority of the Liberal party. He had no sympathy, in the first place, with the cry of weariness which arose in certain quarters, and which demanded that England should cut the Gordian knot of her South African difficulties by withdrawing herself within the limits of Cape Colony, and leaving the great field of enterprise, which she had made her own, to younger and more vigorous rivals. Such a cry could only excite something like disgust in the breast of one who was full of faith in the future of the empire, and who believed that England had been called by Providence to play a leading part in solving the great problem associated with the advance of civilization throughout the world. But there was a still higher feeling than this faith in the imperial destinies of his country which influenced Mr. Forster in relation to South African affairs, and that was his unceasing interest in the natives of the territories which English traders and English troops were fast bringing into contact with the outer world. Once more he had an opportunity of proving that his devotion to the interests of the weak and oppressed was no fleeting sentiment, and the instincts which he had inherited at his birth led him to espouse the cause of the blacks of South Africa as warmly as he had ever done that of the blacks of the United States.

During the session the activity of the Radical section of the Liberal party in its attacks upon ministers was unceasing. A dissolution was manifestly approaching, and what may be called the fighting contingent of the Opposition was eager to lose no opportunity of discrediting the Government. It was a difficult and anxious time for those who were the leaders of the Liberal party, and Lord Hartington on more than one occasion, but notably in the debates on the question of the abolition of flogging in the army, was brought into somewhat rude collision with influential Radicals. Foster stood loyally by his chief at this time, and whilst publicly rendering him all the assistance in his power, did his utmost in private to bring together all sections of his party.

As the autumn advanced, the rumours of an impending dissolution became more frequent. Public opinion was strongly divided as to the result of an appeal to the country; but the general feeling in London, at all events, was that Lord Beaconfield's star was still in the ascendant, and that the new Parliament would be as strongly Conservative as the old one. Mr. Forster did not share these views. In spite of appearances, and the fears of many of his own friends, he was convinced that a great reaction had actually set in. On October 30th, he notes in his diary, "Went to Registration Office, and went through list of seats with Harcourt and Adam. Gave ourselves a

majority of three in England and Wales, and of forty-two in Scotland"—a prediction of Liberal success which time proved to have erred on the side of moderation.

In the midst of the eager party strife which characterized the recess, he did not lose his interest in the grave problem associated with the state of Turkey, but maintained his correspondence with the various friends he had made both in Bulgaria and at Constantinople.

To DR. WASHBURN.

"Wharfeside, Burley-in-Wharfedale, Leeds,
"October 24th, 1879.

"DEAR DR. WASHBURN,

"Your letter of October 8th is most interesting, and your expectation—well grounded, I fear—of trouble in Eastern Roumalia very disheartening, not to say alarming; but I am very helpless in the matter. I have lost all confidence in Lord Salisbury, and therefore cannot send him your letter confidentially, as I should have done before he replaced Lord Derby.

"If Parliament was sitting, questions might be asked; but during the recess all I could do would be to publish your letter with your name, which of course is out of the question. A day or two ago my wife read to me your last paper in the ——, and we were both of us deeply interested. How long can Turkey last? It must

be sad work living in a country rotten to the core. I see no chance of cure. The old ruling principle of the Government is gone; and there is no new principle to replace it. I suppose the old principle was the Theorematic rule of the Sultan, and I suppose, also, that to expect that since Mahmoud's death is absurd.

"If Europe was to hold aloof, would not the Turks right themselves and put in a new autocrat? But I suppose European interference just keeps the Sultan alive long enough for Turkey to die with him.

"I shall be very curious to see your next letter, and to know how *you* read the new Austro-German alliance. Many of the supporters of our Government are now preparing to throw the Turk over, and put Austria in Turkey's place as the barrier against Russia. I wonder what Layard thinks of the position? Anyway, Lord Salisbury, in his allusion to the alliance at Manchester, has shown great want of dignity and reticence.

"I wish you would give me your present answer to this question: *Could* England get the reforms in Asia Minor, contemplated by the Anglo-Turkish Convention, carried out by any amount of pressure *without* force? If you reply, 'No,' then clearly we ought to take the first opportunity of getting out of the Convention. We have no right to risk the lives of our own people by using force, and justice both to ourselves and to the Christians

in Asia Minor, obliges us to give up the guarantee if we do not get the promised reform.

"As yet no one knows whether our Government will face another session. I am inclined myself to think not, and that there will be a dissolution in January. But that is not, I believe, the general opinion.

"Circumstances may change the current of opinion; but if there was a general election now I think the Government would lose their majority, but that the opposition also would not be in a majority if the Home Rulers joined the supporters of the Government. Not a pleasant outlook.

"We went for a few weeks to Switzerland and Italy, getting as far as Florence. Much enjoyed ourselves, and gained health..

"Yours ever truly,

"W. E. FORSTER."

As both the great English parties girded themselves for the struggle, which each was resolved to fight out to the bitter end, the work thrown upon Mr. Forster naturally increased. He had been sneered at on more than one occasion as an example of the "fighting Quaker," and it was undeniably true of him that no man ever relished more keenly the delights of a sharp encounter of wit with wit, and argument with argument, such as usually characterizes a political contest in this country. So long as the fight was a fair one,

waged for a worthy cause, he enjoyed it as much as any man possibly could do.

The contest which had now begun, and which was to reach its culminating point in April, 1880, was one in which he believed most emphatically that his own cause was a righteous one. He was eager, consequently, to assist his party by speech and counsel wherever he could do so. In the autumn of 1879 he went down to Westmoreland to aid Sir Henry Tufton in his election there, and dealt many a damaging blow at the reputation of the Ministry. A little later in the year he took part in one of the most remarkable political demonstrations of the time. It was intended to impress the country with the determination of the Liberals of the West Riding to put an end to the domination of Lord Beaconsfield, so far at all events as the great county of York was concerned. Those who were associated with him then know with how keen an interest he took part, not merely in the vast public meeting at which more than twenty thousand persons were gathered together under one roof, but in the organization of the party that was necessary in order to make the demonstration a success. For when Mr. Forster had an object to gain he thought no pains too great to be bestowed upon his task, and many can bear witness to the fact that in the preparations for this Leeds demonstration of November, 1879, he took an active share, not thinking it derogatory to

his position to perform even the simplest parts of the work which fell to the lot of the members of the committee. In the neighbourhood of his own home, at Otley and at Bradford, as the hour for the conflict approached, he frequently made his appearance as a public speaker, arraigning the Government for a policy which he believed to be thoroughly immoral in its character and disastrous in its results.

It was on the 8th of March that Parliament was dissolved. The secret had been well kept, and it was only upon the evening of that day that the members of both political parties were apprised that the long-expected hour of battle had arrived.

"When I went to the House," writes Forster in his diary, March 8th, 1880, "rather late for questions, found note from Northcote, saying that as Hartington was away he told me he had important communication to make to House. I told Childers and Lowe, and sent to Kensington. We guessed it was probably dissolution. So it was—dissolution for Easter. Much excitement; more surprise and cheering on our side than theirs. I said a few words to express our satisfaction, and, like other members, went off to telegraph—to Illingworth, offering to come down to-morrow." He and Mr. Illingworth had been accepted as the Liberal candidates for Bradford, and side by side they fought the battle of this election. But it

was not his own battle only which Forster had to fight. Like the other Liberal leaders, there were urgent calls for his help on all sides, and he worked hard wherever he was wanted, among the other speeches he made being one to introduce Mr. Herbert Gladstone as the Liberal candidate at a meeting at the City Liberal Club, and another on behalf of Sir Henry Tufton at Kendal. The "flowing tide" was with the Liberals everywhere during those few weeks of intense excitement. But consciousness of this fact did not cause Forster to relax his efforts. Victory at Bradford was certain, yet he worked as though his return depended upon a single vote. On March 22nd he began his campaign there: "Down to very large open-air meeting called by the workmen on vacant space up Leeds road. I spoke for some forty minutes. Three to four thousand present. Think I was well heard. Reception excellent; almost every hand in our favour. After that, two more meetings at Great Horton; then a cup of tea at the club, a meeting near Undercliffe, and one in the Drill Hall. A hard day. Six meetings. Three longish speeches besides the open-air one. In all these meetings the vote for us almost unanimous. Twenty-two public meetings in these five days. My throat weak at the beginning, but no weaker at end."

As the end of the struggle approached, the pace became more rapid still. The Bradford

nomination was on March 30th. On the following day Forster went to London, voted in the City election at the Guildhall, and for Westminster in Ebury Square; called to have a talk with the whips at the Liberal offices; played a game of whist at the Reform Club; and returned to Bradford the same evening, hearing on the road down of the Liberal triumphs at Stamford, Grantham, Lincoln, and Peterborough. Of course, luncheon and dinner had both to be eaten in the train. The next day was that of the Bradford election. "Majority immense," he says in his diary; "more than five thousand for me, almost four thousand for Illingworth, and almost exactly corresponding to our canvass promises. Home by 10.55 train. Received warmly by crowd at Burley." Yet another day of hard work followed the close of his own campaign. (*April 3rd*) "Went by 10 Great Northern train to London. Voted at Guildhall for Herbert Gladstone. Returned by 3 train (to Leeds); sharp work. Went first to Liberal committee-room; then to Music Hall, to an enormous enthusiastic meeting then going on. Ramsden and Fairbairn's last meeting, Barran speaking. I followed him with a rattling speech of thirty-five minutes. After meeting to club, and home by last train." It should be borne in mind that the journey from Burley to London is one of two hundred miles. Down to the very end of the contest he continued to work wherever

by vote or speech he could help the Liberal candidates, and at last, when the victory was won, he simply says in his diary (April 9th), "Our victory throughout the country astounding." The new House of Commons, in fact, contained 349 Liberals, 243 Conservatives, and 60 Home Rulers, whereas in the 1874 House the numbers had been—Conservatives, 351; Liberals, 250; and Home Rulers, 51.

The remarkable victory, which came as a dramatic surprise to the London press and public, but which had been clearly foreseen by Mr. Forster and other politicians who had taken the trouble to study the movements of public opinion in the provinces, was above everything else a triumph for Mr. Gladstone. His was the name under which the great mass of the Liberal electors fought in the constituencies, and to himself personally fell a signal honour in his double return for Leeds (where he had the enormous majority of thirteen thousand votes), and for Midlothian, where, after a campaign memorable for the energy which the Liberal leader displayed in speech-making, he succeeded in wresting a seat from Lord Dalkeith, the representative of the vast territorial influence of the Duke of Buccleuch. But Mr. Gladstone, though he had unquestionably been the leading figure on the winning side in the great battle, was not the nominal head of the party. The official leaders were Lord Granville and Lord Hartington. When the battle had been

fought and won, a brisk controversy arose on the question of whether either of these statesmen or Mr. Gladstone should be Prime Minister. The Queen was abroad at the time when the result of the elections became known, so that the question remained in suspense for some days. What Mr. Forster thought with regard to it will be gathered from the following letter.

To DR. WASHBURN.

"80, Eccleston Square, London, April 21st, 1880.

"MY DEAR DR. WASHBURN,

"I have two letters for which to thank you. The first I had hoped to have answered weeks ago; but the intense pressure of the election delayed me, and now I have your kind note congratulating us on our success. I always expected to succeed, and was considered too sanguine by almost all my friends. But our majority is far beyond my expectation—a much greater English and Scotch majority than at any time since the first election after the Reform Bill.

"Before receiving this you will have heard who the new Premier is. Beaconsfield has in fact resigned to-day. Nothing is yet known, but I have little doubt that it must and ought to come to Gladstone.

"What I shall do myself I do not as yet know; but though I expect to have hard engrossing work, it will not prevent my feeling a con-

tinued deep interest in Eastern affairs. . . . Our difficulty is to do our duty in the question, and especially in Asia Minor, without involving ourselves in dangerous and costly complications. I suppose what we ought to aim at is the promotion of concerted pressure on the Turk, whereas Beaconsfield and Layard have in reality made concert more difficult."

On April 22nd the Queen sent for Lord Hartington, and on the following day he and Lord Granville had an audience of her Majesty, which resulted in a commission being given to Mr. Gladstone to form a Ministry.

CHAPTER VI.

THE IRISH SECRETARYSHIP.

THE post which was offered to Mr. Forster by Mr. Gladstone in the new Administration was that of Chief Secretary for Ireland, with Lord Cowper as Viceroy. It cannot be said that he had coveted this particular office. Full well he knew that, under existing circumstances, it was the position of greatest difficulty in the Government. But public opinion had, by general consent, fixed upon him as the man who was best qualified by his sympathies and administrative capacity to fill it, and when it was offered to him by Mr. Gladstone he at once accepted it, despite the fact that he might reasonably have aspired to a higher place in the official hierarchy. The very fact that, owing to the severe distress which existed in the country as the result of successive bad harvests, and to the agitation which, under the auspices of Mr. Parnell and other Irish representatives, was stirring the tenants of Ireland, the difficulties and risks of the position must necessarily be great, constrained him to make

no demur when the Prime Minister pressed it upon him for his acceptance. The popular idea that he sought for this particular post is, however, unfounded. He took it in the spirit of the soldier who is sent to the front by his chief, and he was not without the hope that he might be able to do something towards solving that great problem of the reconciliation of the Irish people to English rule which had so long baffled the efforts of statesmanship.

Nor was there anything unreasonable or presumptuous in this hope. The man who had successfully solved the education problem which had defied the ingenuity of so many English statesmen, was not without justification for the belief that he could do something towards the settlement of this still more difficult and complicated question. He could not do violence, moreover, to the whole bent of his political aspirations. From boyhood certain great questions had always held a commanding place in Forster's estimation. Of these the most prominent was that question of slavery, which had absorbed his attention in his opening manhood, and which, in one or other of its many shapes, continued to engage his sympathies and occupy much of his time to his very latest day. Another question that towered above others in his mind was that of education; whilst the third was that of Ireland. He had been blessed, almost beyond his hopes, in being permitted to bring

about the realization of his early dreams by the establishment of a national system of education. All that was purest and best in his nature now urged him on to the attempt to do something to brighten the fate of that unhappy country, which he had visited in its hour of extremest need, and towards which all the sympathies of his heart had long been drawn.

Poverty of the bitterest kind weighed upon a great portion of the Irish people. There had been no return, it was true, of the terrible experiences of 1847; but from that year onwards want had been the common lot of a large proportion of the inhabitants of the country. And, by the side of this chronic distress, there had existed a not less chronic disaffection towards the law of the land; a disaffection which showed itself now in agitation against the hardships of the prevailing land system, now in sporadic outbreaks of agrarian crime of the most hideous character, and ever and anon in great popular uprisings against English rule. Distress and disaffection—these were the symptoms of the Irish disease. What were its causes, and how was it to be treated? These were questions which had long engaged the earnest thought of Forster, and it was in the hope of being able, if not to answer them, at all events to contribute something towards their solution, that he accepted the office of Chief Secretary for Ireland in the Administration of 1880.

Writing, before his acceptance of office, to an Irish gentleman who had urged him to take the Chief Secretaryship, he said, "As regards the condition of the country, I much fear you do not overrate the danger. I think, however, you *do* overrate my power of usefulness, and there are strong reasons why, if possible, an Irishman should be appointed. All I can say is, that I should feel my father to be rebuking me from his grave, if I did not do my utmost to prevent personal considerations influencing me in the matter."

There had been specially severe distress in Ireland in the previous year, owing to the bad harvests, and exceptional efforts had been made both by the Government and the people of this country to afford relief to the sufferers. A benevolent fund had been raised, chiefly through the exertions of the Duchess of Marlborough, wife of the Lord-Lieutenant, and a Distress Relief Act had been carried by Parliament. This Act empowered the application of three-quarters of a million of the Irish Church Surplus Fund in loans to landlords. Some good had unquestionably been done, both by the private and public efforts thus made to relieve the distress; but it was clear, both from the result of the elections and from the speeches of the popular Irish leaders, that it was not to measures of this kind that the people looked for permanent relief. The unusual distress of 1879 had intensified and aggravated the chronic

disaffection, and sixty members had been returned to the new House of Commons who were pledged to do their utmost to put an end to English rule in Ireland by securing for that country some form of self-government.

This was the position of affairs when Mr. Forster entered upon office. The distress among the Irish tenantry was very real, and it was aggravated by the manner in which many landlords exercised their rights, for even the Land Act of 1870 had left some abuses in the system of land tenure. There can be no doubt that not only Forster, but all the members of the new Government felt sincere sympathy with the Irish sufferers. They believed that a portion of that suffering, at all events, was due to faulty laws, and to defects in the manner in which the law was administered, and they hoped that by amendments in the existing statutes where they were necessary, and by an administration of the law at once firm, gentle, and sympathetic, they would be able to do much to bring about a better state of things in Ireland. With the demand of the Irish people for Home Rule no member of the Administration showed any sympathy. It was the conviction of all that to grant any kind of local autonomy to Ireland would be ruinous to the interests of the United Kingdom as a whole. But there was a strong disposition to believe that the Home Rule party would be prepared to co-operate with the Liberals upon most

questions of imperial policy, and that by making to Irish demands such concessions as were in themselves equitable and wise, the feeling of the people in favour of Home Rule might be modified if not altogether removed. Such were the hopes entertained by Mr. Forster and his colleagues when they entered upon office at the end of April, 1880. They believed that by showing a real sympathy with the Irish in their distress, by removing any legitimate grievances of which they had to complain, and, above all, by considering the national susceptibilities of the people, they could establish better relations between the two countries and do much to diminish that hostility to the law which had become so alarmingly conspicuous in Ireland.

That these hopes were destined to meet with a bitter disappointment, and that Mr. Forster's career as Irish Secretary, begun on his own part with a feeling of such warm sympathy with the Irish people, was destined to end in gloom, whilst the goal aimed at still remained unreached, are facts known to all. The task of the biographer is not, of course, to write the history of Ireland during those trying years, still less to discuss the great problems of Irish policy, but to show how Mr. Forster did his duty, and what were the conditions with which he had to contend whilst he stood at the helm from May, 1880, to May, 1882. The full truth cannot yet, of course, be revealed; but

at least enough may be told now to convey to the reader a true impression of the character, the motives, and the achievements of the man who during that period played so conspicuous a part in the history of his country; whilst, as to that part which must still remain untold, all who are acquainted with the facts, all who know what Mr. Forster was, what he suffered, and what he did, will agree in declaring that—

> "Whatever record leap to light,
> He never shall be shamed."

Flushed with the brilliant success which they had achieved in the elections, the Liberal party entered upon office, confident that a career of usefulness and prosperity lay before them. Few amongst them seemed to entertain the slightest apprehension as to that Irish question which was destined to assume so grave a character within the next few months. Lord Beaconsfield's defeat had been brought about by the national repudiation of his foreign policy, and, in the first instance, it was of foreign rather than domestic affairs that the new House of Commons was thinking. Hardly had it begun its deliberations, however, before events occurred which showed that the Irish problem was, after all, more urgent than any other. The existing Coercion Act would expire a few weeks after they took office. Their predecessors had not taken the steps necessary to secure its renewal before it lapsed; and one of the first decisions which the

Cabinet arrived at was that, in these circumstances, it would try the experiment of governing the country under the ordinary law. This concession to Irish feeling did not suffice to conciliate the Irish members, and some of them attacked the new Government because there was no allusion to the Irish land question in the Queen's Speech. It was, of course, unreasonable to suppose that a Ministry which had only been a few days in office could be prepared with a measure upon so complex and delicate a subject as that of the tenure of land in Ireland, and this fact was pointed out by Mr. Gladstone in his reply to his assailants. Thereupon the Irish members shifted their ground. It was not a new Irish Land Bill, of a comprehensive character, which they now wanted, they declared, but a temporary measure to stave off the evictions which were threatened upon a large scale, and which had their origin in the inability of the tenantry to pay their rents in consequence of the recent bad harvests. Forster, replying to Mr. T. P. O'Connor, who put forward this proposal, pointed out that it would be almost impossible to bring forward a measure for the suspension of evictions without raising every branch of the land question. Subsequently, in the course of the debate, he stated that, without promising to support such a bill, he would be prepared to give "a fair, full, and considerate hearing" to any proposal which might be

made on behalf of the distressed tenantry. The Irish members were not slow to take advantage of this promise. Mr. O'Connor Power forthwith brought in a Bill for the Amendment of the Land Act of 1870, by repealing those portions of the 9th section of the Act which prevented compensation being paid to tenants ejected for non-payment of rent, unless it could be shown that their rents had been exorbitant. In other words, he proposed that the Courts should have power to grant the tenants some compensation for eviction, now that a series of bad years had so seriously diminished their power of meeting their liabilities to the landlords. Mr. Forster, speaking on June 4th, on the second reading of this bill, intimated that "he was not prepared to oppose its principle." He had already become convinced that the condition of the tenantry was serious. Evictions had increased vastly in number and were still increasing, and he saw that grave troubles lay ahead of the Government in Ireland, unless some measure of relief could be at once afforded to the victims of the bad seasons.

Two days before announcing that he could not oppose the principle of Mr. O'Connor Power's bill, he had written to Mr. Gladstone as follows:—

"I think poorly of ——'s judgment, but there is a foundation of truth in what he says. No doubt the hold on the small tenantry by Parnell and Co. is an ignorant hope that they will get rid

of rent, and the priests are frightened, finding that they are losing their influence. On the other hand, the Home Rule members, especially the Parnellites, are behaving better. O'Connor Power's bill is out this morning, and merely provides that ejection for non-payment of rent shall be deemed a disturbance under the Land Act, without prejudice to any rights which the landlord may have under the said act or otherwise, to any deduction from a set-off against the tenant's claim for compensation. This is so moderate that it will not be easy to meet it with a direct negative. . . . I think we ought to lend money freely in Ireland when (1) the security is good, and (2) the works are of undoubted utility; and I think for this purpose the Board of Works in Ireland ought to be recognized and strengthened. This purpose could be more easily attained if we could obtain a real reform of county local government. We ought to obtain (1) a reform of the grand jury system—that is, such county authorities as could initiate works and combine with neighbouring counties; (2) a reorganization of the Irish Board of Works, so as to give it more strength and knowledge."

Four days later (June 6th, 1880) he wrote again to Mr. Gladstone, pointing out the difficulties of the situation in Ireland arising from the distress, the pressure which was being put upon the tenants by the landlords in order to secure either their rents or possession of the holdings, and the

increasing agitation among the tenants. Mr. Burke, the permanent Under-Secretary,—a man who was devoted to his duty, not merely as a loyal servant of the Crown, but as a patriotic Irishman anxious to promote the welfare of his fellow-countrymen,—was doing all in his power to prevent evictions; but the landlords were still pressing their claims, and it was evident that the difficulties of those engaged in governing the country were increasing. In these circumstances Forster proposed to Mr. Gladstone that a temporary bill providing compensation for evicted tenants should be brought in, and that at the same time a small but strong commission should be appointed for the purpose of inquiring into the working of the Land Act of 1870. It was undoubtedly a grave proposal to make, but the statistics with which he had been provided by the officials in Dublin, and the private reports he had received from Mr. Burke, had convinced him that ministers must step in between the landlords and the tenants if the social system in Ireland was not to receive during the coming winter a shock of almost unprecedented violence. Mr. Gladstone gave his consent to the proposal, and the result was the introduction of the measure for compensating tenants evicted for non-payment of rent. In the first instance the scheme had no separate existence. It was embodied in a new clause of the Relief of Distress Bill, a measure which had been brought in, in part, to indemnify

the authorities for having exceeded their powers in advancing money under the Relief Bill of the previous session, and in part to enable money to be granted for public works and outdoor relief, so that tenants as well as landlords might benefit by this employment of the surplus funds of the Church. No sooner was the new clause added to this bill than it became apparent that it must excite the strongest opposition among the representatives of the landlord interest, and it was eventually withdrawn from the Relief Bill and introduced as a separate measure.

On June 25th the Compensation for Disturbance Bill was proposed for second reading. The argument in its favour was set forth by Mr. Forster in a speech in which he replied to Mr. Chaplin who had undertaken to lead the attack upon the measure. The Irish question was destined to advance so far and so quickly during the next few months that it is hardly necessary to trouble the reader with any detailed recital of the history of this ill-fated measure. The reason for its introduction was the undoubted severity of the distress from which the tenants of Ireland were suffering, and the fact that many landlords were taking advantage of this distress in order to evict their poorer tenants. More than a thousand evictions had taken place in the first six months of 1880. They had occasioned a profound feeling of dissatisfaction throughout the country,

and it was clear that if they were to be continued the task of the Government in maintaining order, already difficult, would become well-nigh impossible. This was, in brief, the plea put forward as to the necessity for the introduction of a bill the practical effect of which would have been to suspend evictions for a limited period. It should be borne in mind that whilst the gravity of the situation of the tenants was not seriously disputed by any unbiased authorities, the relief which was to be given to them under the bill was most strictly limited. The measure was only to continue in operation to the end of 1880, and no compensation was to be given to the evicted tenant unless it should appear, first, that he was unable to pay his rent; secondly, that his inability arose not from thriftlessness or idleness, but from the three successive bad harvests from which the country was suffering; thirdly, that he was willing to continue in his tenancy on just and reasonable terms as to rent; and, fourthly, that these terms had been unreasonably refused by his landlord.

Nevertheless the measure was at once assailed most bitterly by the representatives of the landlord class, who saw in it an attack upon the rights of property, and who refused to admit that under any conceivable circumstances would it be justifiable to throw hindrances in the way of the landlord's right to evict. Mr. Plunket saw in the bill a proposal for the direct confiscation of the income of one

class in favour of another; Lord Randolph Churchill viewed it as "the first step in a social war, an attempt to raise the masses against the propertied classes;" whilst Mr. Chaplin protested against the whole theory under which a landlord was called upon to compensate a tenant because he refused to continue him in the enjoyment of a privilege which in the first instance had emanated from the landlord himself. On the other hand, the bill was defended with equal spirit and boldness, not only by its author, but by Mr. Gladstone and Lord Hartington. The Prime Minister declared that in face of the afflicting circumstances prevailing in Ireland this was a bill which, so far from attacking the rights of property, would enable the State with a safe conscience to use the strength at its command in order to maintain those rights. Lord Hartington pointed out that exceptional circumstances had arisen which put it in the power of the landlord, if he was so disposed, to defeat the main purpose of the Act of 1870, and the Compensation for Disturbance Bill had been framed simply in order to prevent the act being thus overridden. The second reading of the measure was carried by a majority of seventy-eight; but when it came forward on the committee stage, Mr. Parnell himself was added to the list of its opponents, the ground upon which he assailed it being an amendment of which the Attorney-General had given notice, to provide against compensation being

given to a tenant when the landlord had granted him permission to sell his interest in his holding. From that time forward, although this amendment was subsequently itself amended, the bill received no support from the Home Rule party.

It was, however, duly carried through its remaining stages in the House of Commons, and was read a third time on July 26th. On the 2nd of August, after two nights' debate, it was summarily rejected by the House of Lords by an overwhelming majority.

The blow fell heavily upon Mr. Forster. Better than any other member of the two Houses he was able to estimate the effect which the rejection of the measure was likely to have in Ireland, where the Administration were even now finding themselves placed between the cross-fires of landlordism and Parnellism. With the aid of such a measure as that which the Peers had rejected so unceremoniously, he believed that it would be possible for the Government to cope with the rising influence of Mr. Parnell and with the growing agitation among the Irish tenantry. But what had now happened increased enormously the difficulties of the situation, and he foresaw that the action taken in the interests of the landlords was likely in the end to injure those very interests in the most serious manner. He took the first opportunity of relieving his mind of the indignation under which he laboured against those whom

he now regarded as having made themselves responsible for that stormy winter which he saw before him in Ireland. The Peers had rejected a measure of small importance—a bill intended to assimilate the law of registration in Ireland to that which was in force in England. Mr. Parnell proposed that the measure should be sent up again to them, tacked on to the Appropriation Bill. Ministers, of course, were unable to fall in with the suggestion; but Mr. Forster had an opportunity of speaking out about the conduct of the House of Lords, and he did so with a freedom which excited not a little remark at the time. The Upper Chamber had refused to pass the Irish Registration Bill, not because there was anything objectionable in it, but because it had been sent up to them at a time when it was inconvenient to them to consider it. "This," said Forster, speaking in the House of Commons, "was one of the matters in which especially *noblesse oblige*, and the House of Lords ought not to allege personal inconvenience to prevent bills sent up from that House at any time of the session being thoroughly considered. They could not forget—at any rate, the country could not forget—these two facts: first, the Commons were the hardest worked law-makers in the world; and, secondly, that, on the other hand, probably there was no assembly of law-makers with so much power and so little personal labour as the House of Lords. They

must not forget the fact that they were the representatives of the people, and that the power which the Lords had was simply owing to an accident of birth."

This sharp outburst of feeling against the Upper Chamber excited not a little indignation on the part of the Peers themselves; but everybody outside the circle of the peerage felt the justice of the rebuke administered to them. There was, however, a strong and not unfounded belief that Mr. Forster would hardly have employed this vigorous language merely to resent the refusal of the Peers to deal with the Registration of Voters Bill. It was the rejection of the Compensation for Disturbance Bill which had moved him most deeply. He saw in it the beginning of the worst time the English Government had ever had in Ireland; he believed firmly that the landlord interest in rejecting this measure had inflicted an irremediable wrong upon their own order, whilst they had at the same time afforded the opponents of English rule an excuse for a violent resistance to the law. It was the gravity of the blunder thus committed by the Peers that stirred him with a sense of indignation; and it ought to be said that time did not diminish his feeling upon this point. For the rest of his life he continued to speak with mingled indignation and impatience of the conduct of the House of Lords in throwing out this bill. He was blamed, afterwards, when some people

seemed anxious to convict him of wrong-doing in every step which he took, because he did not resign when the Disturbance Bill was thrown out. It would have been strange indeed if he had done so. Every member of the Government shared his feelings regarding the action of the Peers, and if he had withdrawn from his post merely because that action had made his task more difficult, he would really have been deserting his colleagues, and leaving the burden of labour and responsibility which he had shirked, to them. Such a line as this he could never have taken. But when he was viewing the whole question under the sorest feeling of discouragement, he found some comfort in the knowledge that during the next session of Parliament a bill dealing with the whole question of Land Tenure in Ireland would be introduced by Mr. Gladstone himself. In the mean time he determined to struggle on, and to tide over the dark winter which lay before him as best he might in view of the coming legislation.

Very quickly did the first signs of the gravity of the task before him make their appearance. Parliament was prorogued on September 7th, and the Irish orators at once took the field against the Government. Despite the action taken by ministers on the question of compensation for disturbance, and the fact that it was known that they were already preparing a new Land Bill in favour of the tenants, they had not secured the

support of Mr. Parnell and his party; and they received no favour from the men for whose sake they had incurred the serious defeat of August 3rd. Unfortunately, too, the modified degree of friendliness which—in memory of his father's and his own labours in Ireland during the famine year—had been shown towards Mr. Forster by the Irish representatives when he first took office, was quickly changed into a directly hostile sentiment. The Chief Secretary, it was soon seen, was trying to draw towards the Government something of that feeling of enthusiasm which had hitherto only been shown by Irishmen towards the popular national leaders. He did not hesitate to speak out boldly concerning any words or acts on the part of Mr. Parnell or his colleagues, of which he disapproved, and he had even, from the Parnellite point of view, the audacity to appeal from the declarations of the Irish members to the sentiments of the Irish people. It followed that, to a portion at least of the Irish representatives, he was even more obnoxious than his predecessor, Mr. James Lowther, had been.

Soon after the rising of the House Mr. Parnell made his famous speech at Ennis, casting doubts upon the sincerity of the Government in their professed wish to carry a Land Bill in the next session, and advising farmers not to give evidence before the commission which had been appointed to inquire into the question of land tenure. There

was something in this speech, however, of much greater importance than any sneers at Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues. This was the advice which the speaker gave to his hearers, to shun any man who had bid for a farm from which a tenant had been evicted. "Shun him in the street, in the shop, in the market-place, even in the place of worship, as if he were a leper of old," was the advice given by Mr. Parnell; and though he probably had no idea of what he was doing at the moment, he was really, when he spoke, placing in the hands of the discontented party in Ireland the most formidable weapon which they could possibly have secured. From the time of that speech dates the beginning of deliberate, merciless, and scientific boycotting in Ireland. This important declaration by the Irish leader concluded with something like a veiled "no rent" proclamation. Its whole tone was one of extreme defiance, not only towards the English executive, but towards the English law.

In other parts of Ireland speeches were made by other prominent Parnellites in which the existing law was criticized and condemned with the utmost freedom, and in which the people were incited to agitate in such a manner as to compel the English Parliament to give them a really acceptable Land Bill. The agitation, however, was not long confined to speeches, however defiant and violent. On September 25th an immense sensation

was caused throughout the United Kingdom by the murder of Lord Mountmorres, who was found near his own residence in County Galway with six revolver bullets in his body. The whole of the circumstances attending the crime seemed to aggravate its character, and something very like a panic set in among those whose chief interest was the maintenance of the rights of landlords in Ireland. Mr. Forster was at once violently assailed on the one hand for not having taken some measures which would have made a crime of this sort impossible, and on the other adjured to see in the assassination of an unfortunate landlord proof of the failure of the existing system in Ireland, and of the necessity for immediately resorting to remedial measures.

Remedial measures were those of which he had thought first when he took office in Ireland, and about which he ever continued to think most earnestly and constantly. But Parliament was not now sitting. His attempt to introduce a remedial measure had been foiled by the House of Lords, and all that could now be done was that which actually was being done—the preparation of the ground for a renewed attempt at remedial legislation in the session of 1881. In the mean time one plain duty was laid upon him. That was the protection of the social fabric in Ireland against those forces which were now threatening to submerge it. God willing, Ireland should have

the fullest measure of remedial legislation to which she was entitled; but the party of discontent in the country should not meanwhile be allowed to ride rough-shod over the law or the rights of the orderly section of the community.

Very loud was the outcry raised in the press and on public platforms for the introduction of a measure strengthening the powers of the Executive, so as to enable them to cope with the rising tide of defiant lawlessness. There were, indeed, some who believed that no extension of the powers of the law was needed, and who maintained that all that was wanted was the announcement of the determination of the Government at once to introduced remedial measures. Unfortunately this announcement had already been made, and its effect had been very different from that which was confidently anticipated by those men who objected to any renewal of coercion. Boycotting, which had now received its recognized name owing to the remarkable case of Captain Boycott, was daily becoming more rife. The Land League had established courts of its own for the trial of land cases, and these courts, wielding the tremendous weapon of boycotting, were able at their will to inflict the severest penalties upon those who fell under their ban. Outrages upon cattle, attempts at assassination, "moonlighting," the sending of threatening letters, and all other forms of agrarian

crime were on the increase, whilst the tone of the Land League leaders became daily more openly and aggressively defiant.

To have met this state of things, not by any attempt to vindicate the authority of the law, but by the simple concession of all that the league was demanding on the part of the tenantry, would have been justly regarded as tantamount to a surrender on the part of the Government to the forces of disorder. There was no thought of such a surrender on the part of Mr. Forster. But there was one grave question to be considered, and that was in what manner the Executive should assert itself. Men were already clamouring on all sides for an autumn session, and for the hurried passing of a new Coercion Bill. That it must come to that in the end seemed only too probable to Forster; but he required to be satisfied on one point also. He would not agree to any alteration of the existing law until that law had received a fair trial, and its applicability to the existing system had been tested by a prosecution of some of the leaders in the agitation.

MR. FORSTER *to* MR. GLADSTONE.

"Dublin Castle, October 8th, 1880.

"Parnell and company have clever law-advisers of their own. It is not easy even to find technical proof of the connection of any one of them with the Land League, and the Land League has

hardly any written rules, and publishes no list of officers. The speeches are, in fact, almost the only evidence, and these are framed as carefully to keep within the law as they are to tempt others to break it. I trust, however, that I shall have the opinion [of the law-officers of the Crown on the question of prosecuting Mr. Parnell and others] not later than Sunday next. . . . My expectation is that the opinion will show us (1) that we have the strongest moral grounds for a prosecution; (2) that we have doubtful legal ground; (3) that we cannot expect a conviction.

"If such turn out to be the opinion, I still think we ought to prosecute; but I must beg you to turn the *pros* and *cons* over in your own mind.

"The *pros* are—

"(1) We should be doing almost the only thing we can do without fresh legislation; (2) we should be trying to punish men who, without doubt, are great criminals and mischievous criminals; (3) we should prove to every one that we do not fear the agitators; (4) we should make it clear that we are not in league with them. So great is the excitement, that there are many who say, and even some persons, not ill-disposed, who think, that we are not sorry for the outrages, as making a strong Land Bill necessary. (5) We should also make it clear that we did not mean to let Parnell's law be put in place of *the* law—every one, law-breakers included, would feel that having taken up

the gauntlet he throws down, we should have to ask for further powers, if present powers did not suffice.

"The *cons* are—

"(1) Great enthusiasm would be excited for Parnell; subscriptions would flow in from America; (2) the quarrel between the Land Leaguers and the Nationalists would be healed; but I do not think the quarrel helps us now; (3) some of the more moderate Home Rulers would be tempted or driven to join him; (4) he would probably obtain the triumph of no conviction. I fear the best we can expect, from even a Dublin jury, is disagreement instead of acquittal; (5) I fear no trial is possible before January, probably not till Easter. Nevertheless, if the law-officers give us ground to think that we have a case which would carry with it reasonable public opinion, I am for prosecution. I am, however, by no means sure that prosecution will stop, or even materially check the outrages. No one can say. Parnell has incited to these outrages; but they may now be beyond his control. If within his control, it is reasonable to hope he would, for his own sake, do his best to stop them pending his trial. The outrages continue and spread from one county to another. I believe that if we cannot prosecute we shall be driven to a special session for suspension of the *Habeas Corpus;* and even if we do prosecute we may also have to do this; but at any rate we should be

able to tell Parliament that we had done what we could with our present powers.

"Yesterday a very large deputation of landlords came to Lord Cowper and myself—more than sixty from all parts of Ireland, but chiefly from the disturbed districts. They were in a state of great but suppressed excitement, moderate in their language, but with difficulty. They very much confined themselves to giving their reasons for alarm, and calling upon us to give them protection. Administratively, I think we are doing all we can—have proclaimed Mayo and Galway, and asked military authorities to fill barracks in these counties. I hope Spencer will come here next Monday. He comes on education business, but his counsel will be most useful, especially his opinion of the present position as compared with that which obliged the Westmeath Act."

MR. GLADSTONE *to* MR. FORSTER.

"Downing Street, October 9th, 1880.

"I do not see why legislation should mean, necessarily, only suspension of the *Habeas Corpus*. We are now, I believe, inquiring whether the law allows, under certain circumstances, of combinations to prevent the performance of certain duties, and the enjoyment of certain rights. If it does not, as I understand the matter, we prosecute. If it does, why may not the law be brought up to the proper point by an amending Act?"

MR. FORSTER *to* MR. GLADSTONE.

"Dublin Castle, October 10th, 1880.

"My remark in my last note about the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* meant this: that, as before, so now, we may find that nothing will check the actual outrages but arrest and detention of men on suspicion. When the whole population sympathizes with the man who commits an outrage, he knows that hardly any witness will give evidence against him, and that a jury in his own district will certainly acquit him. On the other hand, this suspension is a most violent, I may almost say, a brutal, remedy, and before trying it we must be sure it is the only remedy."

The "concert of Europe" for the purpose of completing the settlement of the Eastern question was at that time, it may be noted, occupying the chief place in Mr. Gladstone's thoughts, and for the moment the question of an extension of the powers of the law was allowed to drop. It was soon, however, revived. In the mean time (October 23rd) it was announced that it had been resolved to prosecute fourteen of the Land League leaders, among whom were Mr. Parnell, Mr. Dillon, Mr. Biggar, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Patrick Egan, Mr. Thomas Brennan, Mr. P. J. Sheridan, and Mr. J. W. Walsh. The charge against them was one of conspiracy to prevent the payment of rent, and to defeat legal processes for the

enforcement of rent, to prevent the letting of farms from which tenants had been evicted, and to create ill-will between different classes of her Majesty's subjects.

MR. FORSTER *to* MR. GLADSTONE.

"Chief Secretary's Lodge, Phœnix Park, Dublin,
"October 25th, 1880.

"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"On the 1st inst. Burke sent to the country inspectors of police queries to which we are now receiving answers.

"I have the answers for Connaught and Munster, and I think them so important that I send them you, though in uncorrected proof. In looking over them, please bear in mind that the disorder which has existed for months in Connaught is now taking hold of Kerry and Cork.

"The last two or three days, there has been some diminution in outrages. This may, and I hope is, in some measure owing to the announcements of the prosecutions, but I fear it is quite as much owing to the Land League getting their way, and therefore not needing outrages.

"The first week after the prosecutions have actually begun, that is the first week or ten days in November, will test our position. Unless we see a real improvement, then I am most reluctantly driven to the conviction that we cannot face the winter—that is, January and February—with-

out special legislation; and if special legislation at all, we cannot conceal from ourselves that it must be special legislation in the most high-handed fashion. I do not believe any bill would be of real use short of suspension of the *Habeas Corpus*. It would have to be a much stronger bill than the Westmeath Act, because we could neither limit it to a confined area, nor to suspected members of any society. It must, in fact, give power to the Irish Executive to shut up any person they consider dangerous. It will require the strongest possible case to justify such action, but unless matters mend, I fear it will be our hard fate to have to take it.

"When Parliament meets, should we accompany our coercive measure by any counter-bill like the Disturbance Bill? I said, quite late in the session, that if we brought in a Coercion Bill in the autumn, *and if we had reason to believe that the landlords were behaving badly*, we should accompany it by a counter-bill. This statement, which was made during your illness, but with Hartington's concurrence, and, indeed, at his suggestion, was much cavilled at by the Tories, and would be much used by the Parnellites, if we bring in a Coercion Bill by itself; but as yet my second condition has not been fulfilled. At present, with few exceptions, the landlords are behaving well. . . . My present position is not enviable. Panic-struck landlords and landladies be-

setting one with letters and interviews; and the worst of it is that I cannot deny that in many cases there is ground for panic. I do not know that we can do more than we are doing.

"(1) Hurrying on the prosecutions as fast as possible.

"(2) Proceeding against actual outrages in the provinces whenever we can.

"(3) Cramming the worst counties with police and military.

"You will see that Kerry and Cork ask for police. We are meeting this request; but the urgency has only now come on. I am, however, getting to the end of my police. By proclaiming counties we can increase the number beyond the parliamentary strength; but, it takes time to make a policeman. They used to think six months, but in the urgency we are sending recruits to peaceable districts in a shorter time, and we are getting some fresh men.

"Only one word more. Our Land Bill, when it comes, must be strong and comprehensive. We had better do nothing than tinker. I do not wish to be dogmatic, but that is what I think."

A few days later Mr. Gladstone wrote to Mr. Forster asking for information regarding the condition of the country, of which he might make use at the 9th of November banquet to ministers at the Guildhall. Public excitement on the subject

was growing daily, and in many quarters it was aggravated by rumours which were beginning to spread of divisions among ministers on the question of coercion, and of the resolve of certain members of the Government not upon any consideration to consent to any extension of the powers of the law until the effects of remedial legislation had first been tried.

MR. FORSTER *to* MR. GLADSTONE.

"Chief Secretary's Lodge, Phœnix Park,
"November 8th, 1880.

"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"I have your letters of the 5th and 7th inst. First as to statistics—as to *outrages*. I shall have ready for Cabinet the fullest details since 1844.

"October is, as I have said, very bad—266 outrages against 167 September; 110 October, 1879; 20 October, 1878. More than the outrages throughout the whole of the six years before 1878. I said in one of my last letters that I hoped the outrages were diminishing in atrocity. I do not think it would be safe to say this. I am not *sure* of the fact—and while we have eighty men under personal protection, we are only preventing murder by the police surveillance.

"*Evictions*.—When I get to the Castle to-day, I hope to send you some figures, but I do not think it will be safe to say much about evictions.

There are very few now—only in Ulster. The landlords fear to evict. Parnell is quite right (in *Freeman's Journal* which I send) in saying that the League has stopped evictions, though he ought to have said, 'the League and its attendant outrages.'

"As regards the immediate question, viz. the suspension of the H. C. Act, it is impossible for any one to dislike it more than I do. On public grounds, I both fear and hate it, probably as much as you, and privately I hardly need say that no man could have a more disagreeable task—one more certain to involve him in discredit—than would be my fate if I have to bring it forward. But I doubt if in any other way we can keep peace and protect life and prevent anarchy. All my questions I have asked myself, and I think I shall be prepared with answers more or less clear. I do not think the Westmeath danger can be compared to the present, though it was easier to deal with. I cannot look with hope to the alternative course of special legislation against the Land League combination. The Parliamentary opposition would, I think, be even stronger. The Irish obstructives would oppose both equally, and the English Radicals would consider their rights threatened.

"But I do not think it would do the job. Besides, it would hardly be possible to bring in such a bill before we knew the result of the prosecutions, and we may not be able to wait for that

result. The present outrages, or rather that condition of the country which produces the outrages, is owing to the action of the Land League, but I believe that now these outrages are very much beyond its control.

"The actual perpetrators and planners are old Fenians or old Ribbon-men or *mauvais sujets*. They would shrink into their holes if a few were arrested. Only we want men. What I meant about making a strong Land Bill depend on cessation of outrage was this:—Any bill which will be worth bringing in must give the tenant class much of what they ask: if it be given while the outrages prevail, it will be generally said and thought that it has been exacted by the outrages. The upshot will, I fear, be that its opponents would, on that account, be able to prevent its passing, and even if passed it will be a temptation to fresh outrage. I think we must first get temporary quiet.

"P.S. . . . To-day we have had a most difficult and dangerous matter to deal with. We obtained information that large bodies of armed men were going from the north to Captain Boycott's farm, one hundred in one body, and two hundred more from Belfast. This would be civil war. We knew the whole country-side would be up against them. We send down to Boycott's district to-night five hundred infantry, and three squadrons of cavalry, and we tell Boycott that we will do what we have always promised to do, and, in fact, urged him to

enable us to do, viz. protect to his farm, and away from his farm, and at his farm, as many men as are necessary for the *bona fide* work on his farm. But we have warned the organizers of the movement that any force of armed men above such number will be an illegal gathering, and must be treated as such. I hope by this means we shall stave off a fight, but if we do not stop outrages we must expect lynch law."

Mr. Gladstone, in his speech at the Guildhall, naturally did not take so gloomy a view of the situation as that which was taken by Mr. Forster when writing in the confidence of official life to his chief; but he made it clear that ministers were resolved, to the best of their ability, to fulfil the obligation under which they lay for the maintenance of the law. This speech for the moment silenced the rumours of dissensions within the Cabinet. But they broke out with renewed violence when the Cabinet meetings began to be held in the week following the banquet. Nor were they at all vague in their character. On the contrary, they were precise and circumstantial. It was said that Mr. Forster, having come back from Ireland convinced of the necessity for the adoption of strong powers, if the authority of the Government was to be maintained, had been opposed in the most vehement manner by some of his colleagues, and it was virtually intimated that when the final decision was made either Mr.

Forster or his opponents would have to leave the Government. Everybody knows now that the difficulty was solved without any need for breaking up the Cabinet. From this fact it might be inferred that there was no foundation for the rumours so generally current at the time; but such an inference would be wholly erroneous. Mr. Forster, armed with the official knowledge he had acquired in his position as Chief Secretary, felt strongly that additional powers must be conferred upon the Executive to enable it successfully to cope with the alarming and ever-increasing disorder in Ireland. He was opposed by other members of the Ministry, and a long and bitter struggle took place. It was not until November 27th that the question was settled, and then it was only settled by a concession on the part of Mr. Forster. It was announced that Parliament would be summoned, not on December 2nd, as Forster had desired, but on January 6th, and nothing was said about any intention to introduce a Coercion Bill when the Houses met. Whilst the solution of the ministerial difficulty was still unattained, however, a very interesting series of letters passed between Mr. Forster and Mr. Gladstone.

MR. GLADSTONE *to* MR. FORSTER.

"Downing Street, November 16th, 1880.

"What you said to me last evening, before leaving the Cabinet room, much impressed my

mind. . . . You said most judiciously, on a former day, that if we are to ask for a suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* it ought to be on a case of great strength and clearness. But do these figures, after all the allowance to be made for 'protection,' indicate *such* a case? As far as I can judge, there is a tendency in Ireland, upon a series of years, to a decline in the total number of homicides. The immense increase in property offences (agrarian) for 1880 seems to me to mark the true character of the crisis and the true source of the mischief, viz. the Land League. But I incline to assume that any suspension of H. C. must be founded on danger to life."

Mr. Forster, acknowledging the letter, pointed out that, whilst it was true that the crimes against life were not so serious as they had been at some former times, it was necessary to bear in mind the existence of a system of general terrorism exercised by means of personal outrage.

In his speech at the Guildhall, Mr. Gladstone had intimated that the time had not yet come when ministers were satisfied of the necessity for a reinforcement of the law. On November 18th he wrote to Mr. Forster, calling his attention to this speech, and asking what new facts had arisen to establish the case in favour of coercion, which he had then said had not been made out.

MR. FORSTER *to* MR. GLADSTONE.

"80, Eccleston Square, London,
"November 18th, 1880.

"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"I think the fair interpretation of your Guildhall speech is that, upon demonstration of inefficiency of present power to protect life and property, you would ask for increase of power. The fair inference is that you had not at that moment the demonstration; but I think another fair inference would be that, spoken at the time that speech was, you awaited the facts which the Irish Government would bring before you when the Cabinets began. Undoubtedly, if these facts do not afford to your mind the demonstration, you are not hampered by your speech. In one respect your speech is very strong,—obligation incumbent on us to protect *every* citizen in the enjoyment of his life and *property*. I have this morning the eviction returns for the last six weeks. I send the summary herewith. The total is 82, against 671 for the previous three months; and for the disturbed provinces—viz., Munster 2, Connaught 21, against 335. This confirms more than I expected my belief—

"1st. That the outrages are not caused at present by the evictions.

"2nd. That Parnell can claim the credit of stopping evictions.

"The Land League teaching realized, *i.e.* out-

rages and the fear of outrages, have done that much."

The struggle within the Cabinet had been maintained up to this point with unflinching determination on both sides, and there seemed a strong possibility that the Ministry would be wrecked owing to the refusal of ministers who had no official connection with Ireland to allow the man reponsible for the peace of the country the means which he and his advisers deemed necessary to enable him to maintain that peace. The following letter explains how the difficulty was at last solved—temporarily, at all events.

MR. FORSTER *to* MR. GLADSTONE.

"Chief Secretary's Lodge, Phœnix Park, Dublin,
"November 23rd, 1880."

"DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"I find little change in the situation. Every week extends the area of the agitation, and makes the inability of the Government to give protection more clear. My own opinion is unchanged—that it is our duty to summon Parliament without delay, and to ask them for further powers. I do not think that those of my colleagues who are opposed to this step have realized to themselves the demoralization consequent upon the Executive allowing itself to be successfully defied. This would be bad enough in any country, but it is

hard to estimate its danger with such a people as the Irish.

"I believe that by waiting till January we shall not only increase our administrative difficulties, but diminish our power of dealing successfully with the land question. It is, however, needless for me to reiterate my arguments in this direction. I suppose I must consider that —— and —— have made up their minds, and I have therefore to determine what, under the circumstances, is my duty.

"If I insist further on Parliament meeting on December 2nd for despatch of business, I suppose one of two results must happen—either —— and —— will leave the Cabinet, or I shall have to do so myself, with or without those who agree with me. Independently of other considerations, which, of course, I do not forget, and looking at the question, as it is my business to do, as regards the government of Ireland, I am well aware that Irish difficulties must be greatly increased by either of these results.

"To put the matter briefly and plainly, it is in the power of —— and —— to compel me either to increase Irish difficulties by a break-up of the Cabinet, or to continue my work here—hard enough under any circumstances—in a way which I disapprove.

"I have come to the conclusion that I must take the last alternative, throwing the responsibility upon my colleagues, especially upon those

of them who, as it were, force me to do so; and I therefore am willing to try to get on with present powers till early in January, but I cannot undertake to do so longer.

"No one will rejoice so much as myself if it turns out that my conviction that matters will become worse this month is a mistake; but I find that my fears are shared by every responsible person here, especially by Law, though he, like myself, has been driven with the utmost reluctance to take the side of coercion."

There can be no doubt that the course which Mr. Forster thus declared his willingness to take, in the interests of the Government of Ireland, was one which was personally distasteful to him. But he felt compelled to do his utmost to avoid the breaking-up of the Administration. He did so, knowing only too well that a very short interval of time would justify his opinion as to the state of Ireland, and would compel those who had opposed him in this matter to acknowledge that he was in the right, whilst they were in the wrong. In acknowledging the receipt of his letter of November 23rd, Mr. Gladstone, writing on the following day, said, "As I said on Saturday that no candid man could ascribe your previous conduct to obstinacy, so I am sure all will admit that in most difficult circumstances you have now, as you did then, acted in the best

light of your judgment and conscience." A consciousness that this was indeed the case helped to sustain Forster under the trying circumstances of the moment; but both he and his colleagues were soon called upon to feel that grievous injury had been wrought in Ireland by the refusal to allow him to demand additional powers for the Irish Government at the date which he originally fixed. Meanwhile he was left to struggle on without any powers save those conferred by the ordinary law, and this in spite of the terrible increase of outrages and the almost unchallenged supremacy of the Land League as the real governing body throughout a large part of the country. What he could do without extraordinary means he did. He obtained a considerable reinforcement of the troops in Ireland, and he issued a circular to the magistrates drawing their attention to the powers which they already possessed under the law, and impressing upon them the necessity for firmness and vigilance in the application of these powers.

It must not be supposed that during all this period of anxiety and uncertainty Forster's thoughts were wholly occupied with the question of restoring the supremacy of the law. He did believe most emphatically that it would be a mistake to introduce a sweeping Land Bill until the authority of the Government had been vindicated; but all the time he was keenly alive to any cases of exceptional distress, and to any methods

for relieving that distress which did not involve an apparent surrender on the part of the law to the lawless. During the summer and autumn of 1880 he was in constant correspondence with his old friend, Mr. James Tuke, and gave all the aid in his power to the beneficent labours of that gentleman in the congested and poverty-stricken districts of Ireland, whether they took the shape of gifts of seed and potatoes for planting or of aid in emigration.

To MR. TUKE.

"September 2nd, 1880.

"MY DEAR TUKE,

"Sir John Macdonald, the Prime Minister of Canada, and Sir A. Galt, the Canadian representative in this country, are coming to dine with me to-morrow, to talk confidentially over the possibilities of Irish emigration. Can you meet them? Dinner at 7.30. You would help us in our discussion, and become known to them, which might be well, as they return to Canada at once. I shall be glad to give you a letter to Thornton, our minister at Washington.

"Yours ever,

"W. E. FORSTER."

The result of the meeting between Mr. Tuke and the two Canadian statesmen, which was thus arranged by Mr. Forster, was the starting of the Manitoba emigration scheme.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PROTECTION ACT.

The month of December found Mr. Forster contending against difficulties in Ireland which were well-nigh overwhelming, and at the same time labouring under the necessity of submitting in England to reproaches which were wholly unmerited. The Tory party, under the leadership of Lord Salisbury, united in denouncing his management of Irish affairs, because of the feebleness and cowardice which seemed to them to characterize it. Every trouble in which the authorities at Dublin Castle had become involved had its origin, according to Lord Salisbury, in the cowardly action of the Government in evading the elementary duty of preserving order. These were the charges to which Mr. Forster had to submit from his opponents, whilst, on the other hand, he found some of his own colleagues in the Cabinet strenuously opposing his application for increased powers, and consequently weakening his position both in the Government and in the opinion of the country.

But mere taunts and misrepresentations were

matters of small moment compared with the state of things which was now prevailing in Ireland. Boycotting had grown with the suddenness of Jonah's gourd, and was now a weapon of the most formidable kind—all the more formidable because it could not be touched under the ordinary law. The use of this method of political warfare was cruel in the extreme. The boycotted man or woman became, as Mr. Parnell had expressed it, as a leper. He or she was shunned everywhere. The butcher and the baker had to refuse the custom of the victim, on pain of suffering ruin themselves. His farm was deserted by the labourers who had grown old in his service, and his crops left to rot in the fields; the very servants of his household turned and fled from his abode as from a city of destruction; and all domestic duties had to be discharged by his wife or his daughters. If he went to the neighbouring market in the hope of selling his stock, he was shunned by everybody, and had to return home conscious of the failure of his errand. If he and his family ventured to go to church on Sunday, seeking in the ministrations of religion some assuagement of the bitterness of their lot, the whole congregation, on seeing them enter, would rise as with one accord, and leave them alone in the building. Verily as lepers they were treated, so far as all social or business or religious intercourse with their fellow-creatures was concerned.

It must be borne in mind that it was not the well-to-do, or those who were somewhat raised in the social scale, who alone suffered from this social ostracism. The poorest and most helpless of labourers who had sinned against the unwritten law, small shopkeepers, servants, both men and women—all who fell under the ban of the League had to pay the penalty. Nor did their hardships end with their exclusion from all the pleasures of social life. By day and by night they were pursued by an enemy—invisible, but none the less formidable on that account—who added to their other sufferings the ever-present dread of a sudden and violent death. In the dead of night, unseen hands would dig a grave in the very garden-walk in front of the boycotted man's door; in broad daylight, masked villains would show themselves behind the hedges which lined the road by which he or his wife or children travelled; and morning by morning the postman brought the threatening letters, ornamented with rude sketches of coffins, skeletons, and daggers, which served to keep the victim's nerves ever upon the rack. His cattle, too, would be found dead from hideous injuries inflicted by men who must have had the hearts of fiends, in the fields or the stalls, and his stacks would be destroyed by fire. Worst of all was the fact that he had to suffer this unrelenting, cruel, and almost demoniacal form of persecution without daring to hope for sympathy,

much less for assistance, from any of his neighbours or friends. Nay, if at last the assassin's bullet struck home, and the hapless wretch was found pouring forth his life's blood by the roadside, no neighbour, even though connected with him by ties of blood, would consent to go to his assistance. He was absolutely under the ban of those who then held the ruling power in Ireland, and his one chance of assistance was that which was afforded to him by the brave and faithful men forming that remarkable body, the Royal Irish Constabulary.

This was the state of things which weighed most heavily upon Mr. Forster during the terrible autumn and winter months of 1880. He was denied the use of any weapons save those of the common law, for the purpose of combating the terrible and remorseless system of persecution of which so many persons were now the victims. All that he could do was to spare no pains in order to afford some measure of help and protection, and to encourage them to the utmost of his power, by the strong sympathy which he showed with them in their sufferings, and by the moral strength with which he sought to brace them to their struggle with the forces of the League. It was heart-breaking work, however, and it did far more than any differences with his colleagues, any attacks on the part of political associates whom he had once trusted, to torture his heart and add "the years that are not Time's" to his age. Every day's post

brought its burden of pain to be borne. The very sensitiveness of his nature, his strong love of animals, his hatred of brutality and violence, increased his sufferings. The outrages which were of such constant occurrence did not come to him in the form of cut and dried returns—mere recitals of the number of cases of cattle-maiming, moonlighting, or threats to murder. Each individual sufferer seemed anxious to pour his own story with all its ghastly details into the Chief Secretary's ear, and much of Forster's time and attention was taken up by the recital of the hideous crimes against which, without some enlargement of the powers of the law, he knew that it was impossible for any one in his position to contend successfully. The details of these crimes mean little now, and it is needless to weave the harrowing story into the narrative of Mr. Forster's life; yet one or two letters, taken at random from those which accumulated upon him at this season, may be read with profit. The first is from a magistrate dealing with the state of the country.

[*Private.*]

"November 13th, 1880.

"DEAR SIR,

"As a magistrate for Limerick, Tipperary, and the Queen's Counties, perhaps as popular as an agent and landlord as any man in Ireland, mixing daily with the people, I deem it my pain-

ful duty to inform you that I have never known the country to be in such a state. The idea amongst the tenant-farmers is that, as Mr. Gladstone disestablished the Irish Church, so he will the landlords, if they persist by violence in fighting him into it. Being in Limerick for the last ten days, I was present at the meeting held there and in Newcastle, and never have I heard such language; and when the Rev. Mr. —— prayed that 'England might be blotted out of the list of nations,' the cheers were loud. Indeed, at every meeting the hatred seems to be intensified.

"Many tenants told me that if they paid their full rents they would be murdered. Some asked for false receipts, and some paid and got none at all. I was told the names of several local gentlemen *whose warrants were signed*, and riding out in the evening near R——, a well-dressed man asked me for the love of God not to be out in the dark, and, going down on one knee, said, 'You see, sir, I honour you next God, and go back.' The police are no longer in the confidence of the people. They know very little, but I think they all know that *something secret* is going on. From the hints I am led to believe it is help from America. Not being in the least an alarmist, and, having the welfare of the people at heart, sympathizing with the Government in making those great changes that may be required in accordance with law and order, I am led to believe that unless the Govern-

ment suspend the Habeas Corpus Act, and get the Irish militia out of the country before March 17th, you will have a general out-rise and many lives lost. I would rather you took no notice of this by letter, as if it was known that I gave any information my life would be attempted."

Among the gentlemen upon whose lives attempts were made was a clergyman, from whose wife Mr. Forster received the following letter:—

"December 27th, 1880.

"SIR,

"Before this reaches you, you will in all probability have received an account of the attempted assassination of my husband, a clergyman of the Church of Ireland, and a loyal man to his God and his Queen. Mr. Forster, you are a Christian man and a gentleman, and I ask you how you and your colleagues can reconcile it to your conscience that, owing to the weak Government of Ireland, a clergyman who reads God's Word, and sees there 'Go preach the gospel to every creature,' and who tries humbly and faithfully to obey his Lord's commandments, is to be made the mark for the assassin's bullet, and that only through the good Providence of that God he tries to serve, I am not this day a mourning widow and his nine children orphans? The cartridge paper of the Enfield rifle, sold by a paternal Government to

rebels, has been picked up on the spot, and the marks are plain where three assassins lay in wait. England spent millions of money and thousands of lives to rescue one missionary from the Abyssinian king, but that was a great and grand proceeding, and the world rang with the praises of England's courage and generosity. Here at home, men of the same blood, of the same faith, living within sixty miles of that same brave England, cannot drive to the Church consecrated to the service of the same God England professes to serve, without risking their lives. For weeks past I have waited every Sunday evening for the news which came last night, that an *unarmed* man was fired at within six yards' distance, and within a quarter of a mile of his own door on the public high-road. You may hold yourself guiltless of the blood that is steeping our unhappy land, but we do not hold you guiltless; neither does *He* who rules over us all. The criminal weakness which armed a superstitious and excitable people, and then turned them loose on innocent men, will surely draw down Heaven's vengeance on that England which Protestant Ireland once loved. When will you feel for those living in constant dread and exposed to perpetual attack? Nine months ago, in my husband's absence, when I was alone with only my helpless children in the house, our stackyard was fired, and nothing but our Lord's protecting hand then saved our house and lives. The 'message of

peace ' Mr. Gladstone has sent us is the murderer's bullet and the midnight torch."

Exaggerated in its vehemence and unfair in its accusations as this letter undoubtedly is, it is nevertheless worthy of being printed here for two reasons; first, because of the light which it throws upon the state of feeling in the disturbed districts at that period, and, secondly, because it is merely a sample of many such letters which were poured in upon Mr. Forster by those who considered him responsible for all that was then happening in Ireland, and who laid upon his head the offences of the Ministry as a whole. Other letters, however, more pleasant in their character occasionally reached him. Thus, at Christmas, 1880, he was addressed by an Irish lady who was an entire stranger to him as follows:—

"December 22nd, 1880.

"My dear Mr. Forster,

"At this Christmas-time, when you have so much trouble and anxiety caused you by my poor country, and when you have so many hard and undeserved words to bear from those whom you are trying to save, I feel impelled as an Irishwoman to tell you that, deep down in many, many of our hearts, we feel intense gratitude to you, and great admiration for the manly bravery you display and the patience with which you bear our way-

wardness. You and Mr. Gladstone—God bless you both!—feel for the suffering of our people, and while you deplore and blame their wrong-doings, you are like our great Master, pitiful to the sinners, knowing that they err through ignorance and know not what they do. . . . I earnestly pray that you may see the fruit of your labours; but, even if not, I earnestly, warmly, and truly thank you in my own name and that of thousands, for all you have done and are trying to do for us. I write this not for an answer, which I do not want; but because you hear so many hard words both in England and Ireland, I want you to know there are many faithful hearts beating for you, and who feel the great honour of having a man so truly honest, earnest, and unselfish working for them and their country's good."

Forster was engaged during the Christmas holidays in preparing the Protection Bill which he had wished to introduce at the beginning of December, and the necessity for which was now generally acknowledged.

MR. FORSTER *to* MR. GLADSTONE.

"Chief Secretary's Lodge, Phœnix Park, Dublin,
"December 26th, 1880.

"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"On Thursday I shall bring before the Cabinet my draft Coercion, or, as it may be called,

Protection Bill. I am obliged to have it drawn up here, but upon the agreement of the Cabinet as to principles, both I and our draughtsmen will be most glad to get Thring's help as to words and arrangements. I am very anxious not to insist upon more than is absolutely necessary, but I am unable to see that we can get on without the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. Failing in evidence is the chief and, to my mind, the sufficing cause of our failure to protect, and nothing will enable us to give protection but the temporary power to imprison without evidence. . . . I think we must have the arms clauses of the last act. They are very long and too numerous, and I should be very glad if we could have a mere clause of renewal, but in May the Cabinet did not think this possible. . . . Christmas is over —certainly not a merry one, but not altogether an unhappy one, because, after all, we are doing what we can. I am very grateful to you for your help to me this past year, I only wish I may be able to help you in next year, but I feel it is my hard lot to bring you nothing but anxieties."

MR. FORSTER *to* MR. GLADSTONE.

"Chief Secretary's Lodge, Phœnix Park,
"December 28th, 1880.

"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"I enclose outrage statistics for November. At bottom I give them for the first thirteen days,

and also for October. I am sorry to say they show a large and progressive increase, especially in maiming cattle and firing into dwellings—the worst forms of intimidation. There is not, I think, much in —— ——'s getting his full rent—in Mayo, by-the-bye, not Connemara. The question is not whether some landlords do not by luck or merit or management get their rents, but whether a large number do not. . . .

"I really believe I am doing everything that can be done by our present powers. . . .

"Leaving the outrages and turning to the Land Bill, the current still sets in favour of the three F's.

"I send you a memorial brought me yesterday, and signed by all the unofficial Liberal Ulster M.P.'s—that is, all but Law,—and they tell me that nothing short of this will keep their constituents from joining the Land League. . . .

"You mention a fresh Government valuation. The arguments for it are evident. Against it are —the delay: could it be made under three years? The unpopularity: it would mean in many cases a rise of rent and its responsibility. A Government valuation at this moment would be looked upon as a Government attempt to fix the rent of every farm in the neighbourhood. I think it would fix it as against the landlord, though not against the tenant.

"Is there not much to be said for (1) taking present rents for the basis as much as possible;

(2) giving time and temptation to landlord and tenant to make their own bargain? I think they would generally do this if they knew that an arbitration court was in reserve.

"—— writes to me that there is much to be said for giving the tenant practical security rather than theoretical fixity. True for the Cabinet, but for Ireland we must not forget that we have to deal with the imaginations and hopes of an excited people.

"Excuse this long scrawl.

"Yours very truly,

"W. E. FORSTER."

Within a fortnight of the date of the above letter (January 7th, 1881) the session began, and it was announced in the Queen's Speech that the "additional powers necessary not only for the vindication of law and public order, but for the protection of life, property, and personal liberty of action" would immediately be asked for. The Irish legislation of the session went beyond this proposed renewal of coercion, however. A measure developing the principles of the Irish Land Act of 1870, and another establishing a system of county government in Ireland, founded upon representative principles, were also promised.

On the day on which Parliament met, Mr. Forster took the earliest opportunity which presented itself of giving notice that he would on the

following evening move for leave to bring in a bill for the better protection of persons and property in Ireland, and another to amend the law relating to the carrying and possession of arms. Feeling both in Parliament and the country was strongly excited, and when Mr. Parnell, amid loud expressions of dissent, had given notice of his intention to oppose both of these bills, a statement from Mr. Gladstone that he would move that they should have precedence of all other business was received with ringing cheers. It was quite evident that, for the moment at all events, public feeling regarding Irish lawlessness was not in a state in which it could be trifled with. A hot debate on the proceedings in Ireland during the recess at once began. In the course of his speech Mr. Forster mentioned the fact that five counties had been proclaimed during the autumn, and that the number of outrages up to the end of December had been 2573, of which 1327 were cases of threatening letters, whilst 153 persons were at that time under special police protection.

The beginning of the long running fight between Forster and Mr. Parnell as the chief representative of the Land League may be dated from this night's debate. Mr. Parnell had spoken defending the action of the League, and Mr. Forster retorted that the meetings of that body had constantly been followed by outrages, and that the object of the League leaders was not to bring about an

alteration in the land law by constitutional means, but to prevent any payment of rent save such as might be made in accordance with the "unwritten law" of Mr. Parnell. He did not charge Mr. Parnell with having himself incited to the outrages which had followed the meetings at which he had appeared, but he held that he must have known very well what would be the result of his speeches and his action. It was clearly the desire of Mr. Forster to fasten upon the Parliamentary leader of the Irish party a personal responsibility for the action of that party as a whole. He had convinced himself not only of the close connection between the League meetings and the outrages which almost invariably followed them, but of the tacit acquiescence of the League leaders in the acts of the outrage-mongers. Hitherto all the most prominent Parnellites had carefully abstained from denouncing outrage, and had rarely if ever said a word in deprecation of those violent threats against the landlords which were constantly being uttered at public meetings in their hearing. It was Forster's object, if possible, to drive Mr. Parnell and his colleagues out of this position of stolid reserve, and to compel them to declare themselves frankly and honestly on either one side or the other—either as the open enemies of violence and crime, or as the active accomplices of the outrage-mongers. He believed that whatever choice Mr. Parnell and his party might make,

decided action on their part must benefit enormously the party of law and order in Ireland.

Mr. Parnell, it need hardly be said, did not see matters in the same light as Forster, and he was clearly greatly irritated by the attempts of the Chief Secretary to make him take his stand either for outrages or against them. Forster had never, since he took the office he now held, been able to count upon any kind of support, or even of fair consideration, from Mr. Parnell, who opposed him alike when he was pressing forward the Compensation for Disturbance Bill in the interests of the tenants, and when he was attacking the outrage-mongers in the interests of the public at large. It was not, however, until Mr. Parnell was thus directly challenged that he became Forster's bitter and unrelenting foe. From that time forward all the forces commanded by the Irish party in the House of Commons were directed against Mr. Forster, and every species of personal attack which malignity could devise and ingenuity execute was made upon the Irish Secretary.

It is unnecessary here to repeat the history of the session of 1881, though I shall have occasion to refer to not a few incidents in that session as I proceed. The reader must understand, however, that from the day on which the Houses met, until that on which they separated, Forster had to submit to nightly attacks, insults, and calumnies of every conceivable and inconceivable description,

whilst the Irish members laboured unceasingly to create among their English colleagues a belief that no matter who might be chosen to replace Mr. Forster he could not possibly be a person so completely unacceptable to the representatives of Ireland as Forster was. The manœuvre is a stale one now; and men look with comparative indifference upon that personal abuse of Irish Secretaries by the Irish representatives which is apparently part of the reward which the former must expect for the faithful performance of their duty. But it was new to the House of Commons when Mr. Forster was first made the victim of it. It is to be feared that there were many members who did not very clearly realize the true motives of Mr. Parnell and his friends, in waging such bitter personal war against Mr. Forster, and who believed that, after all, it must be due to some personal defects of his own, rather than to the peculiarity of the position which he held as the representative of English rule in a country profoundly disaffected, but enjoying parliamentary representation, that he owed the uncompromising hostility of the Irish members. At all events it is certain that such hostility was infinitely more formidable in the days when it was first directed against Mr. Forster than it has ever been since.

Whilst the Irish question was being fiercely debated on the address in the House of Commons, and Mr. Forster was being assailed on the one

side by Lord Randolph Churchill for having allowed Mr. Parnell and his co-defenders in the State prosecutions to be sent before an unpacked jury, as well as for the anxiety he showed to restrain the police from any violent action, and on the other hand by Mr. Parnell on precisely opposite grounds, Forster himself was busied with the details of the new land measure. The bill itself had been undertaken by Mr. Gladstone, but it was, of course, inevitable that Forster should be consulted in every stage of its preparation. Necessity compelled him to assume the ungracious part in connection with the Irish legislation of the year, and to appear chiefly as the author and administrator of a new Coercion Act, whilst to Mr. Gladstone fell the happier lot of being associated with a great remedial measure. But as a matter of fact, Forster's interest in the new Land Bill was as keen as that of Mr. Gladstone himself, and it was to the result of the passing of that measure, rather than to any addition to the powers of the Executive, that he chiefly looked for an improvement in the condition of Ireland.

From MR. FORSTER *to* MR. GLADSTONE.

"Irish Office, Great Queen Street, S.W.,
"January 10th, 1881.

"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"I cannot help telling you that I believe the feeling for the three F's in Ireland prevails

even more than I had supposed. If there was now an election, I believe there would not be ten Irish members returned who would not go for that or something stronger. . . . We must oppose the Irish members in the protection bills, because we cannot otherwise do our duty as an administration; but it is another matter opposing the overwhelming Irish feeling on the most important subject of legislation."

A few days later we find him writing to Mr. Gladstone to suggest means by which the landlords might be prevented from taking advantage of the Protection Act in order to carry out evictions before the passing of the Land Act. At the very time when he was anxiously discussing this point with the Prime Minister, some of the Irish members were charging him with having brought forward the Protection Bill for the real purpose of helping the landlords to recover their arrears of unjust rents. Immediately after the close of the debate on the address, during which eleven nights were occupied, chiefly in the discussion of Irish questions, the Protection Bills were brought forward by Mr. Forster. The shape which they finally assumed was somewhat different from that simple suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act which had first commended itself to him.

In prefacing his description of the provisions of the first of the two measures he had to propose,

Mr. Forster gave some facts regarding the condition of Ireland. During the previous year the number of agrarian crimes had, he said, exceeded by six hundred the total of any single year since 1844, despite the fact that in the interval the population had decreased from eight to five millions. Even setting aside the sending of threatening letters, there had been in 1880, 1253 outrages, two-thirds of which had been committed in the last three months of the year. Abandoning mere statistics, Forster drew from materials which had accumulated upon him only too rapidly during the winter a picture of the condition of the country which was terrible in its character. Incendiary fires, moonlighting, cardings, torture of cattle, attempts at assassination—these, as he showed, were the penalties inflicted upon all who were known to have disobeyed the unwritten law of the Land League, whose rule was now supreme throughout the greater part of Ireland. "In Ireland," he said, "the Land League law is supreme, and there is a real reign of terror over the whole country. No man dares take a farm from which another man has been ejected, nor work for a man who pays his rent, or who refuses to join the Land League. . . . The fact is that those who defy the existing law are safe, while those who keep it—the honest men, in short—are in danger. After all, all law rests on the power to punish its infraction. There being no such power in Ireland at the

present time, I am forced to acknowledge that to a great extent the ordinary law is powerless; but the unwritten law is powerful because punishment is sure to follow its infraction. Take away this power to punish for infraction of the unwritten law, and it will become an empty form. The men who have planned and perpetrated the outrages to which I have referred are the men without whose help the speeches of the honourable members for the city of Cork, Tipperary, and Cavan would be merely harmless exhortations and vapouring. It is these men who have struck terror into the heart of the districts in which their operations have been carried on, and we must strike terror into them in order that outrage may be stopped, person and property may be protected, and liberty may be secured. We must arrest these criminals. We cannot do it now because they have made themselves safe by the enormity of their crimes and the power which those crimes have enabled them to acquire. They know that they would be perfectly foolish to fear the law when no man dares to appear and give evidence against them. Do the police know the names of these village tyrants? Of course the police know them, and they themselves are perfectly aware of the fact. These men may, I think, be divided into three categories. There are, first, those who remain of the old Ribbon and other secret societies of former days; in the second place, there are a large number of

Fenians, who have taken advantage of the present state of affairs, not so much caring about the land as in order to promote their own particular views in regard to the political situation in Ireland; and, in the third, there are a large number of men who are the *mauvais sujets* of their neighbourhood. So it not unfrequently happens that the most powerful man in a particular district is a contemptible, dissolute ruffian and blackguard, who, his character being known by all his neighbours, is shunned by them all, but who nevertheless acts as the powerful and active policeman for the execution of the unwritten law. To what, then, are we driven? Simply to this—to take power to arrest these men and keep them in prison in order they may be prevented from tyrannizing over their neighbours."

When Forster drew that picture of the condition of Ireland, which made so profound an impression upon all who heard it, he had in his mind, not those masses of figures which were all that he could lay before the House, but the details of numberless cases of individual suffering, and of the malignant cruelty of those who were seeking to make themselves the agents and ministers of the unwritten law, which had been brought before his attention whilst in Dublin. He knew, too, that many of the victims of that "reign of terror" of which he spoke, ignorant of the course he had taken in the Cabinet, laid upon him the responsi-

bility for their sufferings, and increased the weight upon his mind by the reproaches with which they assailed him, in the mistaken belief that he had turned a deaf ear to their cry for help. Only those who knew him best could appreciate the extent to which he felt the miseries and cruelties inflicted upon people whose one offence was that they had dared to remain true to the law of the land, or could understand his own bitter sense of impotence when he was left to contend with the adversary with no weapons save those of the common law. Yet those who wish to get a picture of Forster's mind on the day when he stood up in the House of Commons to confess that there was a real reign of terror over the whole of the country, and that the law was powerless to reach the offenders, must endeavour to realize these things.

The provisions of the Protection Bill were simple enough in themselves. They empowered the Lord Lieutenant to issue a warrant for the arrest of any person whom he might reasonably suspect of treasonable practices or agrarian offences, and to detain such person as an unconvicted prisoner for a period not to extend beyond September 30th, 1882.

It was in the closing passage of the speech in which Forster explained the provisions of the bill, that he said, with a depth of emphasis that struck home to every heart, "This has been to me a most painful duty. I never expected that I should

have to discharge it. If I had thought that this duty would devolve upon the Irish Secretary, I would never have held the office. If I could have foreseen that this would be the result of twenty years of Parliamentary life, I would have left Parliament rather than have undertaken it. But I never was more clear than I am now that it is my duty; I never was more clear that the man responsible, as I am, for the administration of the government of Ireland, ought no longer to have any part or share in any government which does not fulfil its first duty—the protection of person and property and the security of liberty."

Historically important as were many of the incidents of the debate upon the bill which had thus been laid before Parliament, the limits of this narrative can only permit of a brief allusion to them. Mr. Parnell was absent from London, attending his trial at Dublin, when the bill was first brought in. There were many of his colleagues, however, who were able and willing to fill his place in leading the opposition to the bill. The most strenuous efforts were made on the part of Irish members for the purpose of obstructing the measure as much as possible. They began by resisting the motion for its introduction, and they appealed to English members to give them their support. The appeal was practically without result, for the Radical members of the House agreed with the Whigs and the Conservatives in admitting the

strength of the case which had been made out on behalf of an amendment of the law, and were inclined upon the whole to regard the proposed measure with favour. The Irish members were thus left to themselves in opposing it.

There can be no doubt of the tenacity and courage with which they did their work. Twice during the debates upon the motion for leave to bring in the bill were the sittings of the House extended to an abnormal length. On the first occasion a memorable incident was the return of Mr. Parnell in the midst of an all-night sitting from his trial at Dublin, where the disagreement of the jury had brought the proceedings—as Mr. Forster from the first had anticipated would be the case—to an abortive end. On the second occasion the House sat for forty-one and a half hours—from Monday afternoon until Wednesday morning, and the sitting was only terminated in the end by the courageous action of the Speaker in putting the question on his own responsibility—a step which led eventually to a great change in Parliamentary procedure, and to the adoption of the closure. In the first instance, the one change made was the adoption, on Mr. Gladstone's motion, of a rule for expediting the progress of public business which had been declared "urgent." Before this proposed rule could be discussed, an extraordinary scene, due to the extreme excitement and passion of the Irish members, occurred in the House. It

began in an explosion of anger, on the part of Mr. Dillon, at the announcement that Mr. Michael Davitt, once a Fenian convict, and now an active agitator on behalf of the Land League, had been arrested and sent back to prison under his ticket-of-leave. Mr. Dillon, declining to submit to the ruling of the chair, was suspended. Mr. Parnell, attempting to prevent Mr. Gladstone from speaking on the subject of his proposed new rule, after repeated warnings met with the same fate as Mr. Dillon, and eventually thirty-six other Irish members in all, who had refused to obey the chair, were in turn named to the House and suspended. It was only after this scene of excitement that Mr. Gladstone was enabled to propose the new rules for expediting urgent business.

The chief object of these regulations was, of course, to enable the majority of the House to cope with Irish obstruction, especially with the obstruction which was directed against such a measure as the Protection Bill. On February 4th, the second reading of the bill was moved by Mr. Forster, the first stage of the measure having occupied five days. On the fourth day of the debate on the second reading, the resolution was carried, and eventually, after the promulgation by the Speaker of stringent rules for expediting the business, the measure passed through its last stages in the House of Commons on February 24th, twenty-two nights, in all,

having been spent in discussing it. On March 2nd it received the Royal assent, and at once became law.

The Protection Act was followed by the Arms Bill, which, after full discussion in the House of Commons, also became law on March 21st.

It was inevitable that, during the heated debates upon the measure, Mr. Forster should come in for no small share of abuse from the Irish representatives and their English allies. They charged him with being more anxious to crush the national liberties under the heel of a tyrant than to afford any relief to the victims of bad laws and an oppressive land system. The Irish newspapers delighted to apply to him, as a name of opprobrium, the epithet "Buckshot"—founded upon the mistaken idea that he had ordered the use of buckshot by the police when they had occasion to fire upon a crowd; and one English member went so far as to speak of him in the House of Commons as "the English Robespierre," and to declare that he was no more fitted than the French revolutionist to be entrusted with the liberties of a people. At the time when he was thus being held up to the hatred of the Irish race he was constantly taking counsel with Mr. Tuke and other active friends of the suffering tenantry, as to the means of relieving the distress where it was specially severe, and was going far beyond the duties of his high office in his personal efforts to

afford help to the starving cottiers of the west. "If I saw my way to a special fund" (for seed potatoes) "of £5000," he writes to Mr. Tuke in February, 1881, "I would gladly give £100; and I do not doubt that England would give." And on the day on which the Royal assent was given to the Protection Act, he wrote to his wife, not making any mention of the measure over the triumph of which he was supposed to be gloating, but telling her that he had just seen a certain firm about "the Belmullet people," and had arranged for their seed. "The £1100 will do the job, and I believe it will save the whole district." "I never felt so happy about any gift of money," he writes to Mr. Tuke (March 8th, 1881). "I believe we shall simply save these poor Erris men, who have behaved very well, and refrained from outrage."

It was during this time also, when party passions were beginning to run high, and Forster found himself engaged in a struggle as severe as that in which any minister of our century has been involved, that he found time to write to an old family servant as follows.

To MARY ROWLAND.

"80, Eccleston Square, London,
"January 2nd, 1881.

"How *very* kind of you to give me and work for me that beautiful handkerchief! I hope and

trust you are really better, for I fear you have had much suffering, and it has been a real sorrow to me as well as to my wife to hear of it. Well, you have one comfort, and a great comfort too; you have tried through life, and on the whole very successfully, to do your duty, and to make better those with whom you have had to do. I wish you could make my Irish friends and foes do likewise. The New Year comes upon me with a great prospect of work. You kindly wish me less hard work than last year. I do not expect this, but I have a hopeful trust it will not be such grievously unpleasant work.

"Yours very affectionately,

"W. E. FORSTER."

The Irish Land Bill was the chief legislative work of the session of 1881. Forster's share in it was not a small one, but it must be noticed here very briefly. He had looked forward to this bill with the utmost hope from the moment when he took office. In his memorandum addressed to the Cabinet in May, 1880, on the question of the renewal of the Crimes Act, he spoke of the necessity for "a strong Land Bill" as being that which was paramount in connection with Irish affairs; and all through the autumn of that year, as well as in the spring of 1881, when he was pushing forward the Protection Bill and the Arms Bill, much of his time and thought were given to

that remedial legislation in the efficacy of which he had so large a faith. It will have been seen from some of his letters to Mr. Gladstone that he was convinced that no measure which did not embody the three F's had a chance of succeeding, and in his various official memoranda on the subject, whilst the bill was under preparation, he dwelt strongly upon the importance of its being made "strong" in the sense of being, as far as possible, comprehensive and complete. He did not agree with the original draft of the Land Bill as sketched by Mr. Gladstone, and he was strongly in favour, not only of fixity of tenure at a fair rent with freedom of sale, but of effectual measures to prevent the overcrowding of certain districts in Donegal, Kerry, Cork, and Connaught.

Whilst the Land Bill was slowly and amid many difficulties making its way through the House of Commons, Mr. Forster was facing the situation in Ireland. The work thrown upon him at this time was of almost incredible severity, and would undoubtedly have broken down the strength of most men. But Forster's wonderful power of bearing fatigue, and his capacity of keeping his faculties on the full stretch for a long period at a time, stood him in good stead now. He went backwards and forwards between Dublin and London, almost living in railway carriages. He felt that his chief place must of necessity be in Dublin, where he was charged with the employ-

ment of special powers for the administration of which he had made himself personally responsible. So every week he went over to Ireland to spend a day or two in consultation with Mr. Burke and the Castle authorities. But the Cabinet, when the Land Bill was passing through the crucible, and the House of Commons, whose members on all sides—Conservatives, Liberals, and Parnellites—were impatient for information or eager to attack the acts of the Irish Executive, also demanded his attention. It was well for him that in his business life, in his electioneering episodes, and in other phases of his experience he had learned to keep his head cool under strongly exciting circumstances. He was enabled now to retain his calmness and self-possession in the midst of a racket which would have overthrown the equanimity of most men. It may be doubted if any, either of his predecessors or his successors in the office of Chief Secretary, had to pass through such an experience of work and excitement as that which he had to encounter from the beginning of 1881 down to May, 1882. It must be borne in mind that, during practically the whole of his tenure of office as Secretary for Ireland, he was the only person connected with the Irish Administration who had a seat in the Cabinet. Nominally the subordinate, he was in reality the superior of the Lord-Lieutenant, whilst he had not the advantage of having a Cabinet colleague in the Chancellor. But there

were graver reasons than the mere pressure of his work, both in the House of Commons and at Dublin, which now caused him serious anxiety.

The passing of the Protection Act had been succeeded by a lull in the progress of the outrages in Ireland. Mr. Michael Davitt had been arrested in February, before the Act was passed, and there had been an outburst of indignation on the part of the Irish people at the arrest of one whose sincerity of purpose was generally acknowledged; nor was the feeling lessened by the fact that Davitt, being a Fenian convict on ticket-of-leave, had been sent back by the Home Secretary without trial to the rigours of penal servitude. Even the announcement that he was being treated with great leniency in prison hardly served to mitigate the bitterness of the national party in Ireland at his arrest. This incident apart, however, nothing of serious consequence happened in Ireland until a few weeks after the passing of the Protection Act. Mr. Parnell and his colleagues in the House of Commons, indeed, affected to defy it and treat it with contempt. But among the Irish people it was evident that there was a feeling of apprehension, and they waited in silence to see in what manner it was to be applied.

The general belief, both in Ireland and in England, was that the framing of the measure would be followed by wholesale arrests throughout the country, and morning after morning people

turned to their newspapers expecting to read of a *coup-d'état* which had led to the annihilation of the party of outrage in Ireland. Forster, however, had given his pledge in Parliament that he would personally supervise the execution of the Act which had practically invested him with despotic powers over the liberties of the Irish, and, strange to say of one who had been compared by a fellow-member in the House of Commons to Robespierre, he took a strict and conscientious view of this pledge. It would be ridiculous—even in presence of the slanders so freely hurled against him by the leaders of the Irish party—to defend him against the charge of having a delight in the use of the powers with which he was now invested. Nothing so utterly abhorrent to him had ever occurred in the course of his political career, as the need for obtaining these powers from Parliament. In his inmost heart he was not without a hope that, now that he had been formally invested with them, he would be relieved from the necessity of making use of them. But in any case he was determined to carry out, both in the letter and in the spirit, the pledge which he had given to Parliament as to the manner in which he would administer the Act.

Wholesale arrests might—probably would—have struck terror into the hearts of many of the enemies of the law, and from the strategical point of view those who complained regarding the failure

to employ the Act in this way were not without grounds for doing so. But how could arrests be effected wholesale when Mr. Forster had undertaken to inquire personally into every case, and to see that the Act was administered with the utmost possible regard for the common rights of the Irish people? So the opportunity, such as it was, of "striking a blow"—the favourite resort, be it said, of men whose only resource is brute force—was deliberately allowed to pass, in order that the extraordinary powers created by the Protection Act might be employed with the strictest regard for the rights of individuals, and for the pledges given when the Act was being discussed in Parliament, that was consistent with the circumstances.

And here a word must be said regarding a charge which during the heated years of Mr. Forster's Chief Secretaryship was not infrequently brought against him, and more than once by men who, it might well have been expected, would have refused to soil their hands by making use of such an accusation as a means of attacking an opponent. That is the charge that he used his authority under the Protection Act in order to arrest his political opponents, not because there was reason to suspect them of having committed any of the offences against which the Act was named, but merely because they *were* his political opponents. It seems strange to one who knew Mr. Forster in private as well as in public, and who knows that,

whatever might be his bluntness of manner, such a feeling as personal malice never found a place in his breast, to have to defend him from an accusation so malignant as this. Forster had many enemies in public life. No man could have won the great place which he had secured before his death without incurring animosities and resentments, no matter how honourable and straightforward his own conduct might have been. And, alas! in this world no man can dare to flatter himself that he is not the object of the jealous hatred of rivals, who either see that he has already outstripped them, or imagine that he stands in the way of their own advancement. Forster shared the common lot. But never during the present writer's intercourse with him, did he hear one word of bitterness or animosity fall from his lips with regard to those who had shown something more active than mere political enmity in their dealings with him. He was invariably, in private conversation, generous and gentle in his allusions to his rivals and his foes. No word was ever uttered by him which showed that the evil passion of jealousy had possession of his breast. It is strange, I repeat, that I should have to defend such a man from the charge of having violated the law—for if the charge had been true, such would have been his offence—in order that he might avenge himself upon his political opponents in Ireland. To those who knew him the accusation must have seemed

utterly absurd. When it was put forward in his lifetime he denied it with warmth and emphasis, and defied his assailants to adduce even the shadow of proof of their assertions. The charge has been repeated since his death, but from first to last those who have made it have failed to bring forward evidence in support of a statement which can only be branded as a malicious and mendacious calumny.

But to return to the course of events in Ireland. Very quickly the Irish people discovered that Mr. Forster had not promised that which he was not prepared to perform, when he undertook himself to superintend the administration of the Protection Act. The Executive, after having secured these powers, proceeded very much as they had done before. No sudden swoop upon the centres of lawlessness was made by the authorities; but here and there, where a strong case of suspicion was proved to exist against some notorious agitator or outrage-monger, he was quietly arrested upon a Castle warrant and conveyed to Kilmainham Prison. The outrage-mongers and their friends recovered speedily from the fright occasioned by the passing of the Act. If this was the manner in which it was to be employed, they felt that there was nothing very formidable in it. So outrages again began to mount up, there were constant collisions between the bailiffs or process-servers and the public, whilst the leading members

of the Land League went up and down Ireland, proclaiming their contempt for the Act and their defiance of the Government. One painful feature of the situation was the fact that the League meetings, whenever they were held, seemed to be followed by a track of crime.

The first distinct aggravation of the situation, after the passing of the Protection Act, occurred at the end of March. At a place called Clogher, a fatal conflict took place between the police, who were protecting a process-server, and the mob. A policeman was killed by the crowd, and the constables, firing in self-defence, killed two peasants. Mr. Dillon, reading the telegram announcing this affray in the House of Commons, declared that the blood which had been shed was upon the heads of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Forster, and that the curses of the children of the slain men would follow them. It was not imputed to them even by Mr. Dillon that they were in any special degree responsible for the collision between the police and the people. Their offence, from the Land League point of view, was to be found in the fact that they had not insisted upon passing a bill for suspending evictions until the new Land Bill had been carried. Another fatal conflict between the police and the public followed the affair at Clogher. Forster hastened over to Dublin in order that he might be upon the spot, leaving to his colleagues the management of Irish affairs in Parliament.

The effect produced by the Protection Act when it was first passed was manifestly fading away. The shape which the Land Act would finally take was still unknown; there were differences on the subject between himself and his colleagues. Meanwhile the Irish leaders and people showed no disposition to be grateful, or even patient, in view of the prospective advantages of the measure. More than ever he deplored the conduct of the House of Lords in rejecting the Compensation for Disturbance Bill of the previous session, and thus paving the way to the existing situation. He could not abandon his post whilst the battle was in full progress, but to those nearest to him he made it clear that this task of governing a people by means of a Coercion Act was intensely distasteful, and he entertained some hope of being able, after the passing of the Land Act, to retire from the Chief Secretaryship.

One of the results of the fatal collisions between the police and the public was a series of speeches from prominent members of the Land League of such a character that it was impossible for the Executive to ignore them without allowing the Queen's authority to be brought into open contempt. A strong measure was resolved upon—the arrest of Mr. Dillon.

One great cause of disappointment to Forster at this time was the apparent inability of the police to discover and arrest persons who might be

"reasonably suspected" of being concerned in outrages. When he brought in the Protection Bill he had stated that the police assured him that they knew the outrage-mongers, and that, provided they were allowed to arrest them on suspicion, they would soon be able to clear the country. These were practically the representations which had been made to him. But, to his disappointment, serious outrages took place without being followed by any arrests. The police, in fact, found themselves at fault, and to Forster's chagrin were unable to make that full use of the powers conferred upon them by the act which had been anticipated. He did what he could in the shape of urging increased care and vigilance upon the constabulary, and especially impressing upon them the importance of acting promptly after an outrage had been committed. The effect of an arrest following immediately upon a riot or an outrage was, he felt, immeasurably greater than its effect would be if it were deferred until people had almost forgotten the occasion of it. The fact that Forster discovered thus early that the Protection Act did not, after all, give him the full power he had hoped to obtain from it, is too important to be passed over at this point in the narrative. He hoped, however, that matters would improve and that such measures as the arrest of Mr. Dillon would satisfy the people of Ireland that ministers were thoroughly in earnest.

Mr. Dillon was arrested in the beginning of May, and a great sensation was produced by the incident throughout the country; for John Dillon was unquestionably not only one of the ablest and most earnest, but one of the most popular of the Irish leaders. It was a strange fate which compelled Mr. Forster, the man who in 1848 had offered to find a shelter for John Dillon the elder, then a fugitive from justice, to issue a warrant for the arrest of John Dillon the younger. But his duty was an imperative one, and he discharged it without flinching. Not that he failed to do justice to the good qualities of Mr. Dillon. Standing behind the Speaker's chair one day in the early part of this session of 1881, whilst Mr. Dillon was launching out in the most violent manner against the Irish Government, Forster turned to a friend beside him and said, "That poor fellow is the most honest of them all; but I am afraid he will be the first of them I shall have to lock up." The punishment, however, which was involved in imprisonment under the Protection Act was altogether different in its character from that which is ordinarily suffered by prisoners. Forster was anxious, above everything else, to abstain from dealing with his "suspects" as though they were convicted criminals. It was necessary that they should be held in detention—some because they were reasonably suspected of having been engaged in the commission of outrages and in other

criminal acts, others because their speeches had the effect of inciting those who heard them to resistance to the law. But no criminal taint was allowed to attach to the man who was held in detention under the powers of the Protection Act. He was treated far better than a first-class misdemeanant in an ordinary gaol. He was not degraded by having menial tasks imposed upon him. He wore his own clothes; he could, if he pleased, provide his own food; he read books and newspapers; he received his friends in prison; he associated with his fellow-captives. This was the manner in which Forster dealt with the prisoners whom he made under the Protection Act.

The penalty imposed upon them was the lightest consistent with their actual detention in gaol. And even the prison doors were opened to them when good reason could be shown for temporarily liberating them. Some were allowed to go home on parole, to see a sick wife or child, others to attend the funeral of father or mother. At the moment when the shrillest cries of passion and hatred were being raised against the Chief Secretary, who held in his hands the keys of Kilmainham, Forster was devoting hours daily to the task of making sure that the imprisonment of the suspects was not merely humane, but even gentle, and entirely free from any trace of cruelty or vindictiveness. Before me lie the grateful letters of a father whose son had been released from gaol in order that he might

attend his mother's funeral; of a mother on a sick-bed who thanked Mr. Forster for allowing her to see her son; and of others who, amid all the slander and calumny that was current throughout the country, had their own personal reasons for knowing that the heart of Mr. Forster was a tender one, and that his ear was never closed against an appeal to his sense of justice or his pity. Such was the system of imprisonment carried out under his *régime* in Ireland. Great differences of opinion, I know, exist as to the best method of dealing with a people who have to be governed against their own consent. I cannot discuss the question here. Mr. Forster's method must stand or fall upon its own merits. It was the method of combining firmness with gentleness.

In giving some account of the dark and stormy months of his sojourn at the Chief Secretary's Lodge in Phœnix Park, I am chiefly indebted to a diary kept with great care and accuracy by his daughter, Mrs. Vere O'Brien. On May 8th, she notes, "Father read to us Mr. Robinson's report of the reception of the seed potatoes in County Mayo. This has been an altogether delightful incident, and it was a pleasure to hear the Chief Secretary reading anything so different from an outrage report. 'I wonder whether they would call me Buckshot Forster, if I went down there?' pondered father."

For some time before this the police had been

entertaining grave apprehensions as to Forster's personal safety. From various quarters they had received hints of the existence of a secret society which was not agrarian, but political in its character, and the object of which was to "remove" by assassination those statesmen and political leaders who were supposed to be obstacles to the attainment of the desires of the Irish people. The first man to be thus dealt with was known to be Forster, and there was naturally great anxiety on the part of the authorities as to his safety. Forster himself was altogether free from this anxiety. To the courage of a brave Englishman was apparently united a certain degree of fatalism. He had his duty to perform, and whatever came to him in that plain path must be right. The religious sentiment, too, which was always so real and strong in his heart, whatever might be his intellectual attitude towards Churches and creeds, sustained him with a sense of the divine presence and protection. Thus upheld, he had no liking for the precautions for his safety which were constantly being taken by the police. In Ireland the matter was very much in his own hands, and he was thus enabled to get rid of the escort which the authorities at Dublin Castle were so anxious to force upon him. The case was different in England, where the supreme authority in the matter was the Home Secretary. It happened that in the month of May Forster went down to Yorkshire

to address a meeting at Bradford. To his annoyance he found, on reaching his peaceful home at Burley, that a large body of police had been quartered in the village, and that both his house and his person were "under protection" to such an extent that his own partner, Mr. Fison, was stopped in the grounds at Wharfeside when on the way to call upon him after dinner. This was more than he was prepared to submit to, and he sent a message to the chief constable of the riding, bluntly telling him that there was to be no repetition of these precautions when he came down again to Yorkshire, as upon the whole he would prefer to be shot.

Things continued to go badly during this month of May in Ireland. Outrages were frequent, and each fell upon Forster like a personal blow. The coarse insults to which he had to submit whenever he showed himself in the House of Commons, and some of which were almost incredibly gross and brutal in their character, were mere trifles compared with the constant occurrence of cases in which farmers who had dared to pay their rents, or labourers who had ventured to continue to serve boycotted persons, were subjected to the most cruel outrages by criminals whose identity could not be discovered. It was disheartening in the extreme to continue the arrests of suspected persons, and to find that all the arrests had no substantial effect upon the returns of outrages.

Then, towards the end of May, there was fresh trouble, owing to the surreptitious publication in the Nationalist newspapers in Ireland of a confidential circular to the police. It necessitated his return to Dublin from the House of Commons, where he had been meeting the Irish members face to face, and watching the progress of the Land Bill. A grave question was to be dealt with, and it could only be effectually dealt with at the Castle. It was how to warn the people that henceforward any assembly for the purpose of obstructing the officers of the law in the execution of their duty would be dispersed, if necessary, by force.

The "assemblies" which were thus to be dealt with were not meetings, but were the riotous mobs which appeared upon the scene whenever the process-servers were going about their hateful work under the protection of the police. Hitherto the police had shown the most admirable self-command under grievous provocation. But Forster, though he did everything possible to encourage them in this display of patience and forbearance, felt that there were limits beyond which the endurance of flesh and blood must fail, and, knowing that in the last resort force must be used, he was anxious to give fair and full warning to the people, before that point had been reached.

To MR. GLADSTONE.

"Dublin Castle, May 27th, 1881.

"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"I find myself unable to return to London to-night, and I am not sure that I shall be able to do so on Monday, in which case it will not be worth while to return before Whitsuntide. As you have got into committee on the bill, I am very anxious to get back; but, on the other hand, administration here requires constant attendance, and it is very difficult to direct on details from London.

"The struggle to repress lawlessness is very severe, but I have more hope of success than when I first came over. There are districts—especially parts of Limerick—which are in the most dangerous excitement. I still hope to make the writs run without bloodshed; but it is very difficult, and the magistrates have to possess a rare combination of firmness and forbearance. The insults to the police are almost past bearing—for instance, many hundreds of men and women yelling like savages, throwing dirt, spitting in their faces, for hours. This, of course, they bear; but when stones are thrown, actually endangering life, it is hard to keep them quiet. On the other hand, firing probably means many men and some women killed, and an almost certain verdict of wilful murder against the men, if they fire without orders, though in defence of their lives, and

against the resident magistrate if he gives the order to fire.

"On the other hand, thanks to our arrests, the outrages throughout the country are certainly diminishing, and more rents are being paid. As regards the evictions at present, the large majority of them are perfectly just, but though the increase already is great, I expect a very much larger increase of decrees next month, unless we can devise some arbitration or mediatory clause.

"Yours very truly,

"W. E. FORSTER."

To MR. GLADSTONE.

"The Castle, Dublin, May 29th, 1881.

"DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"I am much obliged to you for your note. I am sorry to say I think I must stay here over Whitsuntide. I am clear I am more wanted here for the next fortnight than in London. There is one especial matter which I hardly dare to leave uncontrolled, or to attempt to control by telegrams from London.

"It is clear that we cannot allow a repetition of what took place last Saturday week in Co. Limerick. Not merely must the sheriff and his officers be protected, but an obstructing, stone-throwing mob must be dispersed. Further legal processes must be carried out within a few days, and, if let alone, the mob will be much larger and

more dangerous than before. I am taking steps to send an overpowering force of soldiers and police, and I intend at the same time to have a proclamation posted throughout the district, warning people that an assembly to obstruct the law is unlawful, will be dispersed, and that they will attend it at their peril. I hope by this means to assert the law without bloodshed, but it is a ticklish business, needing constant watching.

"As regards McCarthy's motion, I cannot speak again. If it gets again into a real debate, . . . a few words from you, or, in your absence, from Hartington, will be useful, as of course there is a great effort here to separate me from the Government."

This allusion to Mr. McCarthy's motion, and the attempts which were being made to separate Forster from his colleagues, had reference to a resolution directly censuring the Irish Executive of which Mr. McCarthy had given notice, and for which eventually only twenty-two members voted, and to the growing practice of Mr. Parnell and his followers of alleging the existence of a party within the Cabinet which was opposed to Coercion and to Mr. Forster's method of governing in Ireland.

The proclamation warning persons who assembled for the purpose of obstructing the execution of the law that they would be dispersed

by force was duly issued, and Forster awaited the result. So far as he himself was concerned, he believed that it would lead to a verdict of wilful murder being returned against himself, whenever any one was shot by the police.

"I am doing three things," he writes to one of his colleagues (June 4th). "Arresting all those central and local leaders of the Land League who can be reasonably suspected of incitements to violence, and I think these arrests are telling; (2) letting the sub-sheriffs and landlords know that they must tell us what protection they want, and when and where, thereby preventing them from being masters of the situation; (3) giving the people to understand that, if they drive us to it, we must fire on them. I think by striking blow after blow every day I may make the law prevail; but it is a hard job, and if there be a relaxation of action when I am back, not much good will follow."

He was feeling the weight of the struggle now, and it was telling upon his spirits. This employment of soldiers and police for the purpose of securing the rights of individuals and the supremacy of the law, necessary though he felt it to be, was certainly not to his taste. Not to do such work as this was it that he had accepted the Irish Secretaryship, and his sensitive nature was deeply wounded at the thought that this should be the end of all his labours for Ireland. His mind reverted frequently to the idea of resignation.

"Again this evening (June 12th) father reverted to the possibility of his resignation," writes his daughter in her diary. "'It is seriously to be thought of whether, after the Land Bill is passed, I should not get out of it all. The Cabinet would make arrangements for me. *I can never do now what I might have done in Ireland.*'" I have underlined one passage in this sentence, because it furnishes the key to that wish of his to retire from his post which I have mentioned. It was because the hope of benefiting Ireland in the way which seemed best to him had vanished, and not because of the difficulties and annoyances of the office he held, that he was anxious to be released. He saw clearly enough that Fate had driven him into a line of action which effectually barred the door to the realization of his own personal hopes and aspirations as regarded Ireland. To other men might come the happiness of being able to sow the seeds of peace and goodwill between Irishmen and Englishmen. To his lot it had fallen to have to maintain the cause of law and order in days of the most critical danger and anxiety; and in doing his duty as the minister of the Crown, he knew that he was at the same time putting an end to all possibility of the accomplishment of the work which he had long hoped that he might achieve in Ireland. This knowledge was very bitter to him. It did not, however, interfere in any degree with his devotion to the duty which

had been laid upon him. If he had to govern by sword and rifle, if by no other means could the supremacy of the law be maintained and social ruin averted in Ireland, then he would do his duty, and do it thoroughly. This was the resolve which he faithfully carried out during the terrible autumn and winter of 1881; but rightly to appreciate all that was involved in this stern devotion to his task, it is necessary to bear in mind the fact that in the spring of that year he already clearly realized the truth that the performance of it must for ever alienate Irish sympathies from him, and must shut him out from a field of action towards which throughout his life he had been strongly attracted.

One can imagine the case of a minister who could revel in the exercise of the vast powers with which Forster was now entrusted, and who, inspired by a sense of the importance of the duty entrusted to him, could even feel a sense of exhilaration in wielding all the forces of the law in a contest with the chronic disorder and disaffection of the Irish people. Forster had the combative instinct strongly developed, and it cannot be alleged that he had any qualms of conscience when called upon to deal severely with open enemies of the law. In fair fight he was prepared to strike hard. But he had looked to other means of pacifying Ireland than the rifles of the police or the bayonets of the soldiers, and he felt keenly

the failure of the conciliatory policy which he had hoped to carry out. There was, too, a painful sense of the failure of the Protection Act to answer its purpose which added to the bitterness of the situation. At the close of June, the return of agrarian crimes for the quarter had reached the total of 961, against 755 in the preceding quarter, and 245 in the corresponding quarter of the previous year. It was thus made evident that the fall in the outrage returns which had followed the passing of the Protection Act had been temporary merely. Six murders, it should be noted, had taken place during the quarter, against two in the preceding quarter.

Mention has already been made of the threats which were frequently used against Mr. Forster, apparently with the idea of influencing his policy. It was during this month of June, 1881, that public attention began to be prominently called to the outrageous language of a Fenian ex-convict named O'Donovan Rossa, who had taken up his abode in New York, where he had placed himself at the head of an organization the object of which was to further the ends of the revolutionary party in Ireland by means of outrage and assassination. Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Forster were both denounced by this miscreant, and it was understood that both were in danger of meeting with a violent death at the hands of his tools and accomplices. It was, however, against Mr. Forster that both in Ireland

and in America the members of the party of violence raged most furiously. I am indebted to Mr. Jephson, who acted as private secretary to Mr. Forster whilst he was in Ireland, for an interesting communication throwing light upon this feature of his Irish work.

"Mr. Forster used to receive large numbers of threatening letters, many of them evidently mere threats, others of them of more genuine importance. They used to amuse him rather than otherwise, and if by chance a few days passed without his getting one, he would remark upon their absence. On one occasion an explosive letter was sent to him, but, as he had left Ireland the day before it arrived, it was brought to the Under-Secretary, who, rendered suspicious by its appearance, handed it over to the police, with instructions to get it chemically examined, when its true nature was at once made apparent.

"More serious, however, than either threatening letters or this clumsy device, was the information which used from time to time to reach the Government of plots against Mr. Forster's life. Precautionary measures were adopted—at first unknown to Mr. Forster, as he disliked the *gêne* of police protection, but later reluctantly submitted to by him. One morning in the early part of 1882, on my arrival at the Castle I received a written report giving detailed information of an intended attack on Mr. Forster. The source from which

the information came was such that there could be no doubt as to its accuracy, or as to the imminence of the danger. On Mr. Forster coming to his office I brought the report to him to read, and urged on him in the very strongest terms the absolute necessity of his taking extra precautions for his personal safety. He listened rather impatiently to me, and then pushed the report away from him, saying to me, 'You may do as you like about it, but I have a presentiment I am not going to die that way.'"

Among the many threatening letters which he received during the summer of 1881, there was one of which he used often to speak afterwards. It professed to come from a man who, having determined to assassinate him, had followed him into the Phœnix Park one morning when he was walking there accompanied by his daughter, Mrs. O'Brien. The murderer had dogged him for some time, but finally, according to his own statement, had determined to spare him for the sake of "the lovely girl" by whom he was accompanied. Forster would tell the story with unfeigned delight at the thought that he had thus been indebted for his safety to his daughter. But I shall have to return to this question of his personal safety, and the plots against his life, at a later period of my narrative.

To LORD RIPON.

"80, Eccleston Square, London, July 17th, 1881.

"MY DEAR RIPON,

"I have had your most delightful letter, I fear, for a month, and have not replied to it; and yet I am not, after all, an ungrateful wretch. I have been watching for time to send something really like a reply, and that is not easy; but I *was* glad to get your letter, for its sympathy with myself, and its hopefulness about your own health and work, which work I honestly believe to be most fruitful for good. . . .

"By the time this reaches you the Land Bill will be law; and I fully believe much as brought in, though somewhat simplified, and therefore improved. I do not expect the Lords to try any important changes: they know we cannot accept them. The Irish Tory M.P.'s are almost to a man for the bill, and would be damaged if it was not passed, and Cairns knows their feeling and has influence in Irish matters. As to Ireland itself, its condition *is* bad, but better than it was. I have two evils to contend with—open resistance to legal process, evictions and the like, and secret outrages. When I went to Ireland at Whitsuntide, I made arrangements by which I got the better of the open resistance, and have in fact put it down, and that without a collision. I hardly dare say this, for fear the police and soldiers may, after all, be forced to shoot in earnest and really

kill; but as yet, by employing sufficient force, and warning the people by special proclamation of the danger of resistance, I have avoided this calamity, and thereby disappointed the expectation, and I fear the wishes, of both extreme parties, which, alas! absorb almost all Ireland, or at least all Ireland which makes itself felt. The greatest of all Irish evils is the cowardice, or at best the non-action of the moderate men; and, indeed, this is the best, if not the sole argument for Home Rule. Sensible, moderate Irishmen let things alone and let them get from bad to worse, because they know that at a certain point we English must step in and prevent utter anarchy. As to secret outrages, the first effect of the Protection Act was very good; but the fear was soon discounted, and I have had to put the Act into much more active operation, and, indeed, to arrest right and left; and at last I am stopping the outrages. I believe this month they will be at least only two-thirds of last month, or, indeed, of either May or June. For this I am, of course, much hated, and indeed I have had, and have still, a hard time of it. It seems almost like an irony of fate that, with my Irish antecedents, day after day has been occupied by despotic arrests on suspicion, and by arranging when and where to send detachments of troops. . . Just read what Gladstone said, after a more than usually virulent attack on me last Monday—so virulent that it was not possible for him to treat it with the contempt

of absolute silence. What he did say was very generous and loyal. In fact, one great compensation for the troubles and vexations of the last year has been the fact that I have got to know Gladstone, and really to love and honour him. No one could have been more faithful, or considerate, or generous to a colleague than he has been to me. He is wonderfully well and vigorous, and his own hold on the country is stronger now than ever it was. As to myself, public opinion in England and Scotland is very kind to me; but I sometimes doubt whether it is possible for 'Buckshot' Forster to do more for Ireland than restore order and help to pass a good Land Bill. Good Irishmen, such as L—— and S——, tell me the hatred to me is hollow and not preventive of usefulness; but I sometimes doubt this, and I am not sure that I shall not take the first opportunity of getting out of my position without running away. . . To return to Ireland for a moment, I am very anxious about my arrears clause. I enclose it. It is an effort to avoid the great administrative difficulty of the immediate future. Unless I can tempt and, in fact, bribe landlord and tenant to agree together, we shall have a bad autumn with certain and, to a great extent, justifiable evictions. It is no use crying over spilt milk; but I still believe that the passage of my Compensation for Disturbance Bill, last year, would have stayed the strike against rent."

The settlement of the arrears question in the Land Bill, which is alluded to in the foregoing letter, was embodied in a proposal that the Government should advance fifty per cent. of the arrears due for the bad years 1878 and 1879, in cases where the tenants and landlords had settled for the rents of 1880. The money required for this measure was to be drawn from the surplus of the Irish Church funds. This proposal was accepted by the House of Commons by a large majority.

"Father's letters this morning," writes his daughter (July 25th), "included three typical specimens. A severely worded letter from an Irishwoman living in London, appealing to his conscience, and requesting him peremptorily to release those innocent persons the 'subjects;' a friendly letter from a Newcastle man, assuring the Irish Secretary of the loyalty, support, and approbation of the majority of his townsmen; a threatening letter, adorned with the usual coffin and cross-bones, from an Irishman purporting to be a sub-constable in Ulster."

The passing of the Land Act, after a stormy crisis occasioned by the action of the Peers, and a fierce attack by the Parnellite members upon Mr. Forster's administration of the Protection Act, were the closing features of the session of 1881. So far as the Land Act is concerned, it is bare justice to Forster to say that all through the Parliamentary work of the year, and even at the

time when his own duties in Ireland were most pressing, he had been more deeply interested in the fate of that measure than in any other question. Allusion has already been made to the part which he had in shaping it. He shares with Mr. Gladstone the responsibility for the measure. Attempts were made at the time by Irish members, and some English members also, to convey to the public the impression that, whilst the Protection Act was the work alone of Mr. Forster, the Land Act was the sole work of Mr. Gladstone. The statement was absolutely untrue, and Forster's name may with just as much reason be associated with the one measure as with the other. The passing of the Land Act greatly revived his spirits and his hopes for the success of the ministerial policy in Ireland; and when, in the closing days of the session, he had to defend himself from an organized attack upon his Irish administration, he did so in a manner which won the approbation of the overwhelming majority of the House. With the Land Act in force, and Irish tenants showing themselves eager to make use of it, things undoubtedly looked better in August than they had done for several months previously.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BATTLE WITH THE LAND LEAGUE.

THE returns for the month of July showed so considerable a falling-off of agrarian outrages that Forster and his colleagues were entitled to congratulate themselves upon a distinct improvement in the condition of the country. So hopeful, indeed, did everything now look, that, when he had visited Dublin in order to settle the appointments necessitated by the establishment of the Land Court, Forster was able to leave England, on August 27th, for a short holiday in Switzerland. He was, however, quickly called back to his duties. A vacancy had occurred for Tyrone, and a contest had resulted in the return of a supporter of the Government. This election, following immediately upon the close of the session and the passing of the Land Act, seemed to Mr. Gladstone to indicate that such an improvement had taken place in public feeling, that the time had come when there might be some relaxation of the system of coercion. He was particularly anxious that one at least of the imprisoned suspects, Father Sheehy, who had

been in gaol for some months, should be released, believing that such a step would do much to conciliate those tenant-farmers who were now hesitating as to whether they should trust to the Land Act or continue to give their allegiance to the Land League. On September 8th he wrote to Mr. Forster, who was then at Annecy, urging these views upon him; and Forster felt that he must at once return to England.

To MR. GLADSTONE.

"Annecy, September 11th, 1881.

"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"Your letter of the 8th inst. reached me this morning, forwarded from Chamounix. I felt at once that matters were too critical for me to be longer away, and therefore I get to London as quickly as I can, and I hope you will receive to-day my telegram, saying that I hope to arrive there to-morrow evening. I agree with you that this unlooked-for good fortune in Tyrone is a strong temptation to turn the flank of the Parnellites by an act of clemency; but there are considerations which must not be ignored. Ulster is not Connaught or Munster. We have had few or no outrages in Tyrone. We have no proof as yet that Parnell has lost his influence in the south or west; or that the intimidating orders of the league will be disobeyed in Connaught or Munster, or that outrages there will diminish.

"I have great hopes that the league is losing its power, and that the Tyrone defeat will have a great effect throughout Ireland; but up to now Limerick, West Cork, Kerry, and the Loughrea district of Galway have been as bad as ever.

"A few days, however, will give us the necessary information, and as regards Monaghan, there must be some days before the election.

"You will observe that in accordance with the decision come to when I was in Dublin, they are releasing daily those men respecting whom they are day by day receiving reports that detention is no longer necessary. Any way, I think events confirm this policy; but we must, I think, be pretty sure of the worst districts before a general amnesty. It would be very awkward to have such general amnesty followed by an outbreak of outrage.

"On the other hand, if we do more than we are now doing—viz. release, (1) on grounds of ill health, leniently considered; (2) where local authorities consider detention unnecessary,—I do not see where we can stop short of a general amnesty, or, at any rate, of release of all not suspected of murder: nor do I think anything short of this, including Davitt, would have much influence on the Irish imagination, or indeed, be very easy to justify. . . .

"On the whole, what I incline to is this,—

"(1) Get all possible information this week as

to actual outrages, intimidation, and real power of the Land League. The convention meeting and the American remittances will both tell us much.

"(2) If we still find the Land League losing power and the outrages diminishing, then act boldly, and run the risk of a release of all the suspects except the suspected murderers.

"It certainly would be better that no important step should be taken in my absence, as we cannot afford to have my power weakened. But I can now, if necessary, get to Dublin on Wednesday, and shall certainly be there on Friday. I hope you will get this on Tuesday morning, and that therefore I may get a reply in London on Wednesnesday morning, or, if necessary, a telegram on Tuesday.

"As Spencer is at Aix, I have telegraphed him to meet me, if possible, at the station, as both you and I will be glad to get his opinion.

"Yours very truly,

"W. E. Forster."

On September 15th, Forster reached Hawarden, and with his family spent the night there; proceeding to Dublin on the following morning. It was clear, both to him and to Mr. Gladstone, that a critical moment was approaching in the struggle between the Government and the Land League. Ministers had been anxious to see how the Land Act would be received in Ireland, and the Tyrone

election had convinced them that, in some parts of the country at least, there was a disposition to recognize the importance of the boon which had been conferred upon the tenantry. Forster, however, as the letter just given shows, was not so sanguine as Mr. Gladstone seemed to be regarding the general feeling of Irishmen outside of Ulster, and he viewed with dread the possible results of anything which might be construed into a surrender to Mr. Parnell and the league. Nor did the events which immediately followed in Ireland tend to reassure him upon this subject.

Of these, one of the most noticeable was the Land League Convention, which sat for three days, at the Rotunda in Dublin, to discuss the Land Act. The members of this convention did not denounce the Act, but they gave Mr. Parnell the credit of having compelled ministers and Parliament to carry it. At the same time Mr. Parnell himself made it clear that he was prepared to watch the operation of the Act jealously; and he announced that the duty of the Land League would be to provide test cases by means of which the precise value of the measure might be ascertained before any general use was made of it by the tenantry. Another important event, showing that as yet the Government had certainly not "touched bottom" in their attempts to sound the depths of Irish discontent, was the great reception accorded to Mr. Parnell in Dublin. This demonstration, which took

place on his return to the capital after attending some Land League meetings in the provinces, was said to be the most remarkable incident of the kind which had occurred in Ireland since the days of O'Connell. It was quite clear that the rivalry between "the uncrowned king" and the lawful Government of Ireland was still maintained, and that the supremacy of the law had yet to be secured. In spite of this fact, the release of Father Sheehy took place, and—as Mr. Forster had feared—it was regarded as a triumph for the popular cause. Father Sheehy accompanied Mr. Parnell on some of his speaking tours, and both the priest and the Parliamentary leader indulged, not merely in the most vehement attacks upon the Government in general and upon Mr. Forster in particular, but in a systematic attempt to prejudice the minds of the people against the Land Act, and to prevent any use being made of the benefits which were conferred by it.

On September 26th, Forster wrote to Mr. Gladstone suggesting that Mr. Parnell himself should be arrested. The great demonstration in Dublin in honour of the member for Cork had been most disloyal in its character, and it was known that similar demonstrations were being organized in other parts of the country. "In your letter you ask whether Parnell has ever condemned the explosive dynamite policy. I do not remember any such condemnation, but I do remember that

he called the Salford Barracks explosion, which killed one or two persons, a practical joke. I will send you the extract. I think you will do great good by denouncing Parnell's action and policy at Leeds, but I do not think he is worse than the others. On the contrary, I think he is moved by his tail, and has been driven to make this speech."

Mr. Gladstone assented to the arrest of Mr. Parnell, if, in the opinion of the law officers of the Crown, he had by his speeches been guilty of treasonable practices. An appeal was forthwith made to the law officers for an opinion on this point, and the nature of their decision was not long left in doubt. Nothing, however, will more clearly display the character of the situation at this most critical moment in the history of Ireland than Mr. Forster's letters to the Prime Minister, and the facts will be far better conveyed to the reader in his words than in any narrative by another person, however carefully it may be compiled.

To MR. GLADSTONE.

"Chief Secretary's Lodge, Phœnix Park, Dublin,
"October 2nd, 1881.

"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"Frederick Cavendish will have told you how anxious and unsatisfactory matters are here. Last evening I received from Law a detailed answer to my questions as to our powers, but,

unless you wish it, I do not know that it is worth while troubling you with it.

"It contains nothing new, with one exception. J—— discovered two days ago a section in the 1861 Act (cap. 100, s. 39) enabling magistrates to give three months in case of violence, or threats of violence, to any person with intent to hinder him from buying or selling wheat or other grain, flour, meal, malt, or potatoes in any market or other place. This is useful for some boycotting; and, while glad to find any new weapon, I feel somewhat aggrieved that it has not been before discovered. It will be very difficult, however, to obtain evidence of the threat of violence, which I suppose must be physical force. With this exception we have only one fresh card to play—a more stringent use of the Protection Act. Instructed by experience, and taking into account the failure of witnesses and the uselessness of juries, I believe the police inspectors and the resident magistrates are making the best of the ordinary law, and specially lose no chance of arresting for assaults whenever possible to obtain evidence. But unless we can strike down the boycotting weapon, Parnell will beat us; for men, rather than let themselves be ruined, will obey him and disobey the law. I send you a most true description of this weapon by a priest, spoken last Monday at Maryborough, in Parnell's presence. I read it to the three Roman Catholic bishops

who called on me to talk on education; but, notwithstanding their recent resolutions, I have no expectation that the bishops will silence such priests. How, then, can we strike down this weapon? Solely by the Protection Act, and by giving it a wide interpretation, not justified at first, but now, to my mind, abundantly justified.

"I think, where we have reasonable suspicion (1) that a man has been intimidated in order to prevent him carrying on his lawful employment, or to oblige him to refuse to pay his just debts, or to join the Land League; (2) that this intimidation is such as to give alarm to any man with average nerve; (3) that this intimidation has been ordered by the the Land League, either in Dublin or in a country district; (4) that any man is a ringleader in giving such orders;—then I think we are justified in arresting such man.

"The only legal doubt is whether such intimidation can be held to include ruin to property, and not confined to threats of personal violence. . . . It would be useless and weak merely to arrest local Land Leaguers and to let off the Dublin leaders, especially Sexton and Parnell. If we strike a blow at all it must be a sufficiently hard blow to paralyze the action of the league, and for this purpose I think we must make a simultaneous arrest of the central leaders and of those local leaders who conduct the boycotting. There is no doubt that, though poor men do not

much fear being locked up with plenty to eat and their families cared for, well-to-do men very much fear being treated as suspects.

"I think the leaders would cease to boycott if they found out it meant imprisonment. There is no doubt such simultaneous arrest would be a very strong measure; but I think English opinion would support it. I see no alternative unless we allow the Land League to govern Ireland: to determine what rent shall be paid; what decisions by the Commission shall be obeyed; what farms shall be taken; what grass-lands shall be allowed; what shops shall be kept open; what laws shall be obeyed, etc.; etc., etc.

"This other course may be suggested. Call Parliament together to pass a law to suppress the Land League, and declare any association illegal with the object to prevent the payment of any lawful debt.

"The objections to this course are: (1) The delay. (2) The difficulty of passing the Act. (The Radicals and working-men would resist any general Act.) (3) But worse still, to my mind, its uselessness. No Irish jury would convict under such Act. (4) The Land League would change its name, or meet under no name. Meetings to address their constituents would suffice. (5) The Act would have to give power to prevent all political meetings, and even then the orders to boycott would be given and obeyed without meet-

ings, and with little risk of punishment if evidence before magistrates, still less verdicts before juries, be required. (6) After all, we should be driven to rely on arrests on suspicion, unless we resorted to martial law, in which I believe any attempt at fresh coercion would end.

"Meantime, we have to deal with *men*, not *names*. There remains the question, Will the Land Act beat the Land League, and save us from more stringent coercion? I have little, almost no hope, that it will; but, as we have waited so long, it may be well to TRY to wait a fortnight longer, when the Land Courts will be at work, and we shall find whether men's minds are absorbed by the courts, instead of by the efforts to intimidate or to resist intimidation.

"I do not think, however, we can wait beyond a fortnight, if we are to act at all. The end of this month and the beginning of next, the landlords must make a desperate effort to get their rents, and if we are to paralyze the Land League at all, we must do it before then.

"Yours very truly,

"W. E. FORSTER."

From MR. GLADSTONE.

"Hawarden, October 3rd, 1881.

"Your sad and saddening letter supplies material for the most serious reflection; but I need not reply at great length, mainly because in

the points most urgently practical I very much agree with you. I almost take for granted, and I shall assume until you correct me, that your meaning about 'ruin to property' is as follows:—you do not mean the ruin to property which may directly result from exclusive dealing, but you mean ruin to property by violence, *e.g.* burning of a man's haystack, because he had let his cars on hire to the constabulary. On this assumption I feel quite prepared politically to concur with you in acting upon legal advice to this effect.

"Nor do I dissent, under the circumstances, from the series of propositions by which you seek to connect Parnell and Co. with the prevalent intimidation.

"But I hardly think that so novel an application of the Protection Act should be undertaken without the Cabinet. I anticipate their concurrence, and their preference of this mode of proceeding to an autumn session, for the purpose of putting down the league (my old fancy). But the Cabinet, besides being strong in itself, has four members who have Irish experience, three of them in the House of Lords. Here is a force the use of which, I am disposed to think, the occasion calls for.

"As for the time, I do not know whether you see advantage in waiting for the Commission to act. I presume its action would not be felt and understood so as to operate upon the case before us until after days, perhaps weeks, from its meeting.

"If you agree in this, what would you say to Wednesday in next week? Reply by telegraph or post, as may be convenient. You might wish an earlier day. . . .

"I hope that you will find adequate support under your labours and anxieties. I am sure you will continue with unabated manfulness to look them in the face."

To MR. GLADSTONE.

"Dublin, October 4th, 1881.

"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"Thank you very much for your letter. My definition of ruin to property is not precisely yours.

"I do not think we can confine the definition to such ruin as is caused by physical violence, as, for instance, threat of burning a haystack; but it must be a 'crime punishable by law, being an incitement to intimidation.' I believe the lawyers now think that the ruin, far greater than burning a haystack, which follows from a stoppage of sales and purchases is such intimidation, but I will put your point precisely to them. . . .

"I suppose it will be necessary to have a Cabinet, and if so, Wednesday in next week will be, I think, the last day. At any rate, it will show that the action of the Executive is not merely my action, but that of the Government.

"Both sides here, landlords and Land Leaguers,

are anxious to give the impression that I have not the support of the Government or even of yourself. Very likely your speech at Leeds will remove such impression.

"When I spoke of waiting for the Land Act, I did not mean waiting for the actual decisions of the courts, but waiting for a test of the feeling of the tenants by the number of applications and their effect on general feeling.

"I have just received private information that the Land League has received a *large* remittance from America, and is therefore much increasing its activity. This will enable landlords and leaguers to reiterate their declaration that Parnell really governs the country—a statement not easy to bear, because I feel just now it is too true!

"I think you may do good by your Leeds speech, by saying—if I may venture a suggestion—in unmistakable words, that if the Land Act continues to be met by disorder, there must be a new departure in administrative as well as legislative policy. Now that we have made the law just, we are called upon to put down lawlessness with a strong hand; nor do I see how we can call Parliament together to give us fresh coercion until we have tried the full extent of our present powers. . . .

"P.S.—I have just received the following telegram from Mill Street, Co. Cork: 'Patrick Eary shot at Doonasheen last night at 11.30, by a party of armed men, who went round to some of the

farmers and asked them if they had paid their rent—the man shot is now apparently dying.' I have a further telegram that he is dead."

"Is it wholly impossible," wrote Mr. Gladstone, in his letter, acknowledging the foregoing (October 5th), "to enlist the action of loyal men as special constables or otherwise, in support of law and order, *e.g.* for day work in relief of the constabulary, in some parts of Ireland, at any rate, if not in all, so as to relieve our overworked force, and increase the total of our available means? I feel anxious, but I cannot bring myself to despair about this. At Leeds I shall do my best."

The meeting at Leeds, to which frequent reference was made in the correspondence of Mr. Forster and Mr. Gladstone at this time, was one of the notable political events of the year. Mr. Gladstone had been elected at the head of the poll at Leeds, in the general election of 1880. He had not, however, accepted the seat, choosing that for Midlothian. His visit to Leeds was to thank the electors for the honour conferred upon him in the previous year, and it was regarded with the utmost enthusiasm by the Liberals of Yorkshire. It was natural that Forster should think yearningly of his old friends in the West Riding at this moment, and should regret the fact that he was compelled to be absent from so interesting a gathering. All the preparations were now, how-

ever, being made for the great blow, which was meditated against Mr. Parnell and the Land League. In the letter from Mr. Gladstone, of which I have quoted a small portion, Forster was earnestly adjured to have everything in readiness for the arrest of the leaders of the league in case the consent of the Cabinet to that measure should be obtained at the meeting which had been summoned for the following week. He had accordingly to remain at his post in Dublin, making preparations for the anticipated *coup*. His presence there was all the more necessary, because Mr. Burke, the devoted Under-Secretary, was absent.* Forster would have been glad to have had him with him at that crisis; but it was absolutely necessary that secrecy should be preserved regarding the intentions of the Government; and if Mr. Burke, who was taking a short holiday on the Continent, had been recalled to Ireland, the suspicions of the Land Leaguers would undoubtedly have been aroused. It devolved, therefore, upon the Chief Secretary alone to make all the preparations for the blow which he hoped soon to be able to strike at the enemies of the law in Ireland. His sole confidant was the commander of the forces, Sir Thomas Steele.

* Lord Cowper had for some weeks been absent on leave. He met Mr. Forster by appointment in London on Wednesday, October 12th, and was informed of the intended arrest as soon as the Cabinet broke up, but did not return to Ireland till after the arrest had been made, in order to avoid exciting suspicion.

To MR. GLADSTONE.

[*Confidential.*]

"Chief Secretary's Lodge, Dublin, October 6th, 1881.

"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"I have both your letters of the 4th and 6th.

"I will write to the Lord Chancellor to-day if possible, if not to-morrow.

"I entirely agree with you that if we strike we must do so instantly after the Cabinet, especially as regards the principal arrest.

"Naturally, you wonder the police do not catch the armed parties. All I can say is, I do my best to stimulate them, and they have been more successful in some places, but it is hard for either you or me to estimate their difficulties. As regards special constables, one of the first questions I asked months ago was, Why could we not have them? I was soon convinced that in Ireland they are impossible. In the south and west we cannot get them, and in the north, Orangemen would offer themselves, and we should probably have to put a policeman by the side of every special to keep him in order. . . . This will catch you just before you start for Leeds. I think such a speech as you propose must do good. I wish I could be there to hear it, and to hear the cheers.

"I suppose I shall hear very soon when the Cabinet is fixed; but I hope the fact of the summons will not get out till after Sunday. There

are several Land League meetings on Sunday, and I want to give Parnell and Co. full swing.

"Yours very truly,

"W. E. FORSTER."

Mr. Gladstone went to Leeds, and had a reception there which exceeded all expectations; it may be doubted, indeed, whether any political leader of the century ever received so remarkable a greeting from the people of a great community. One speech of the many which he made stood out in special prominence and attracted universal attention. It was that which he delivered at a great banquet, held in a noble hall specially erected for the purpose, on the evening of October 6th. In this speech he devoted himself to the Irish question. The hall had been decorated with the names of prominent Liberal statesmen, and directly opposite to where Mr. Gladstone stood was inscribed the name of Mr. Forster. Amid enthusiastic cheers from the vast audience the Prime Minister pointed to Forster's name, and spoke in generous terms of the painful and arduous task in which he was then engaged; and then he went on in clear and forcible language to denounce the conduct of Mr. Parnell and of the other Land League leaders, in striving to stand between the people of Ireland and the Land Act in order that the beneficial effects of that measure might not be allowed to reach those on whose behalf it had

been passed. Such conduct, however, Mr. Gladstone declared, would not be tolerated. "The resources of civilization" were not exhausted, as Mr. Parnell would yet discover if he continued to maintain his attitude of uncompromising hostility to the law. The speech made an immense impression at the time—an impression which the events of the next few days greatly deepened. Even Mr. Gladstone's colleagues in the Cabinet did not know at the moment when he spoke that he and Mr. Forster had at that time practically decided on the arrest of the Land League leader; but everybody felt that such a speech indicated the resolve of the Government not to be beaten in their conflict with the forces of the league, and portended a grave development of the ministerial policy.

"The reception of your name," wrote Mr. Gladstone to Forster (October 8th), "in both the Cloth Hall meetings was everything that could be desired. There is no time for details; but in one word it is a wonderful community. I expected much, and found much more."

To MR. GLADSTONE.

"Dublin, October 9th, 1881.

"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"Let me thank you with all my heart for your speech, both on public and private grounds. Your most kind allusion to myself

really helps me, and, though too kind, I am very grateful. All that *words* can do will be done by your warning. It will have effect in Ireland, but we must not be sanguine. The effect will, I fear, soon die out, if deeds do not follow words.

"I think the general interpretation of your speech is that we will act if your warning be disregarded. It therefore may be difficult to arrest P. and Co. on Wednesday or Thursday for conduct before your speech.

"On the other hand, boycotting orders may be renewed to-day or before Wednesday; if so, I should advise the Cabinet to immediate arrest.

"It is possible, though not, I think, probable, that Parnell's reply to you at the Wexford meeting to-day may be a treasonable outburst. If the lawyers clearly advise me to that effect, I do not think I can postpone immediate arrest, on suspicion of treasonable practices. I understand your letter of the 27th ult. to approve of this. I have drawn up a minute for the Cabinet to be circulated on Tuesday evening and on Wednesday, and send to-night a man in whom I have the fullest confidence to have it printed, and circulated most confidentially.

"I arrive in London Wednesday morning, and will call on you before the Cabinet.

"Yours very truly,

"W. E. FORSTER."

The Cabinet was summoned suddenly for a meeting on Wednesday, October 12th. Nobody either in Ireland or England knew exactly what was about to happen; but an uneasy sense of some impending event of signal importance was felt both in the Land League and the Government circles in Dublin. On October 10th things looked very bad. "They are worse now than they have yet been," was the remark which Forster made in his family circle that morning. More than two hundred suspects were in prison, but the total of outrages still grew. In September, 416 agrarian crimes had been reported, being a higher number than in any previous month of the year save January.

Still more serious than the outrages was, however, the hold which Mr. Parnell now seemed to have obtained over the tenantry, for whose benefit the Land Act had been passed. It was evident that the Act was at the national leader's mercy, and that unless some means could be found of crippling his power for mischief, no good effects would be allowed to accrue from it.

On Tuesday evening, Forster, who had been in secret consultation with Sir Thomas Steele during the day, crossed over to London; and on the Wednesday, after an interview with Mr. Gladstone, he met the Cabinet, and obtained the necessary assent to the arrest of Mr. Parnell. From the Cabinet he walked to the nearest telegraph office, and himself despatched a message

to Sir Thomas Steele. It contained the one word "Proceed;" and the Irish commander-in-chief, who alone was in possession of the great secret, at once took the necessary measures for securing the person of the Land League leader so soon as the warrant for his arrest had been signed. In the evening, Forster left London, and on Thursday morning he was once more in Dublin. The public, and even the officials at the Castle, with the one exception I have named, knew nothing of what had been his business in London on the previous day, or what had been decided upon by the Cabinet. It was absolutely essential for the success of the great blow which was about to be struck at the league that the strictest secrecy should be observed, and Forster certainly deserves the credit of having secured that secrecy. He drove to the Castle, and there signed the warrant already prepared for Mr. Parnell's arrest. Then he went to the Secretary's Lodge, and sat down to breakfast with his family. Before the meal was finished, a note announcing that Mr. Parnell had been arrested and was at that moment in Kilmainham was placed in the hands of the Chief Secretary.

Within twelve hours the news had spread throughout the civilized world, and everywhere it created a profound sensation. Mr. Gladstone, speaking at a great meeting in the Guildhall on the same day, first announced the fact of Mr.

Parnell's arrest to the people of England, and the statement was received with an outburst of enthusiasm that startled even the speaker himself. It was hailed almost as though it had been the news of a signal victory gained by England over a hated and formidable enemy. The truth is that Mr. Parnell had up to that moment impressed the English imagination in a very singular manner. He seemed to have entrenched himself behind fortifications which were impregnable. His followers might bring themselves within reach of the law. He, however, whilst carrying on an open war against the Irish Government had seemed able to set the Executive at defiance. His astuteness had been equal to his courage, and even when dealing the heaviest blows at the authority of the Crown in Ireland, he had appeared to keep himself within the letter of the law. There was an angry sense of impotence on the part of the English people as they watched his course, and a feeling of wonder as to how long the impunity he had hitherto enjoyed was to last. The announcement of his arrest seemed to break the spell of his immunity, and to bring him down to the level of the other members of his party. Throughout England the belief was general that his imprisonment in Kilmainham must mean the downfall of his authority and the extinction of the great organization of which he was the head.

The exultant joy which the news of the action of the Government occasioned in all English circles, had its striking counterpart in the dismay which was felt by the Land Leaguers. For the moment it seemed to them, as well as to their opponents, that all had been lost. Their most trusted leaders, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Dillon, and Mr. Sexton, were in prison; their treasurer, Mr. Egan, had only saved himself and the funds of the league by flight. They were temporarily stunned by the blow. But with surprising quickness they recovered themselves, and delivered their counter-attack upon the Government in the shape of an address to the tenants of Ireland, calling upon them to cease all payment of rent whilst their natural leaders were in prison. Forster was prepared for this step, however, and he met it by another measure, not less important in its character than the arrest of the Land League leaders. This was a proclamation which he instantly issued on his own responsibility, declaring the Land League to be an illegal association, and announcing that its meetings would be suppressed by force.

By a somewhat dramatic coincidence the proclamation against the Land League was issued on the day on which the Land Court was opened, October 20th. At the opening of the court, some amusement was created by a slip of the tongue on the part of the clerk, who, in making the royal proclamation, described the new tribunal as "the

Court of the Land League." A little later in the day the Chief Secretary's thunderbolt against the league was suddenly launched without warning, and the country learned that the fight between "the two living powers in Ireland" was one which both sides were determined to wage to the bitter end. Forster never took a stronger step than when he thus, as it were by a stroke of the pen, suppressed the Land League. There was no time for consultation with his colleagues. The reply to the "No Rent" proclamation of the Leaguers, if it were to be of any use, needed to be given at once, and it was consequently solely upon his own responsibility, and without leave from the Cabinet, that he issued the proclamation declaring the league to be an illegal association. Convinced, however, that such action was necessary, he did not hesitate to take it, and to trust to his colleagues for a justification of his conduct.

To MR. GLADSTONE.

"Dublin Castle, October 20th, 1881.

"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"I trust you are not really poorly.

"We have taken a very important step to-day. I hope and believe you will approve.

"The 'No Rent' manifesto of the league could not be passed by, and gave us an excellent excuse. Accordingly, the law officers have drawn up the

proclamation I enclose. Sullivan assisted in the wording, and O'Hagan approves of the purport.

"You will have observed that a priest, Cantwell, presided at Tuesday's meeting, and made a violent speech. The question was whether to arrest him. I never had a more difficult question. He is the administrator of Croke's parish, and his arrest might have driven Croke to some outburst, which would also have obliged his arrest.

"I decided not to arrest him yesterday, sending underground messages to the bishops of his danger. I am glad I waited, as Croke comes out this morning with a long letter denouncing the manifesto. I hope the good bishops will follow. What with the bishops deserting the league—our arrests and proclamation and the Land Court opened to-day, I am now really sanguine of success.

"Herbert will tell you of our conversation last evening with —— and ——. On the whole it was hopeful, but I believe all the outside help we shall get will be (1) moral force demonstrations; (2) defence by men of themselves and their property.

"As yet I can find no one who does not think that volunteer policemen will do more harm than good. I had yesterday a curious illustration. We have stopped the rowdy mob riots in Dublin, but they are precisely the riots which would have been put down in an English city by specials. I suggested specials, but every one was against me, by

reason of the partisan, and probably the religious animosity that would be provoked, and the bitter rancour that would be left.

"Yours very truly,

"W. E. FORSTER."

The latter part of this letter had reference to renewed attempts, which Forster was making at the suggestion of Mr. Gladstone, to secure from the law-abiding portion of the community some active assistance in the maintenance of law and order. He himself had little hope of the success of such attempts; and, as a matter of fact, the well-meant project failed when it was sought to carry it into effect.

Writing to one of his colleagues, Forster defended and explained the course he had taken with regard to the league and the suppression of public meetings.

"November 1st, 1881.

"MY DEAR ——,

"Your inquiry is twofold. (1) As to the legality of our late action. (2) As to its policy, or rather timeliness,—why not earlier? . . . The effective part of our proclamation is not the mere declaration that the Land League is illegal —this declaration we might have made at any time since our prosecution of Parnell and Co. but the declaration that we would disperse the

public meetings, and the warning that we would arrest prominent leaders, without doubt is a new departure, become possible by the development of the Land League policy into an undoubted organization of robbery by terrorism.

"At the end of my mem. you will see a letter from Johnson, stating that he had now arrived at the conviction that we could disperse the public meetings as liable to break the peace; and we made up our minds to arrest the leaders under the Protection Act.

"No jury can attack these arrests, and I am quite prepared to justify them as necessary arrests to prevent flagrant intimidation. With regard to the public meetings, I have, between ourselves, had hard steering. I was much pressed to instruct the police to force an entrance into committee-rooms and forcibly break up the committees. This would have resulted in an action which must have come to a jury, and probably to a hostile verdict.

"I have, therefore, given instructions to warn persons attending private meetings that they are liable to arrest, and to take down their names. Hitherto this has sufficed, but we may have to make many arrests under the Protection Act. Of course an action *may* be brought against us for force used in dispersing a public meeting, but I do not think this likely if we continue to take care that our force is overpowering; and, anyhow, of this we must run the risk.

"(2) Now as to time. When could we have taken the step earlier? Remember this—the proclamation would have been a mistake unless we had first arrested Parnell and the Dublin leaders. We could not have arrested them or suppressed the Land League while the Land Bill was passing. Public opinion would not have supported us; and so high-handed a proceeding requires an overpowering concurrence of public opinion.

"Until the Land Act was passed we had to find out and prove to the public that it would not of itself beat the Land League. I really do not know how the blow *could* have been struck earlier; but I am quite sure that it would have been fatal to wait longer; and nothing but the consideration that the 'No Rent' manifesto must be immediately answered by a suppressing proclamation induced me to issue it without consulting my colleagues. The law officers fully approved it, and I felt sure Gladstone would approve, but I did not venture even to consult him. He might have thought it necessary to consult the Cabinet, and hesitation would have been destruction. As to our present position, it is much better than it was, but we have still a hard fight of it.

"Yours very truly,

"W. E. FORSTER."

"The Leaguers," Forster wrote to Mr. Gladstone (October 22nd), "are showing no open fight,

and every report we get shows that our last blow has struck home, and it is felt to be well-timed. . . . You say you are still unconvinced about aid from the community. If you mean physical aid, I think a week at the Castle would convince you. Every one tells me, and my own experience convinces me, that if I asked for physical aid I should not get it where wanted, and when I did get it would have to exhaust time and energy in preventing civil war. On the other hand, I gladly stimulate all efforts for moral aid, though these require careful watching. For instance, I had to tell ——, one of our very best landlords, courageous and moderate, that one of the resolutions of his excellent association broke the law, and would have to be rescinded. . . . I ought to add that my fear now is an increase of secret outrages."

The last words of this letter indicated the direction in which the thoughts of those who were at the head of affairs in Ireland now ran, and too fully were their apprehensions to be realized during the winter which was now setting in. So far as the open agitation and resistance to the law were concerned, the victory lay with the Executive. The Land League had been suppressed on the ground that it sought to obtain an unlawful object, —the prevention of the payment of rent by criminal means—intimidation and conspiracy. The chief leaders of the popular movement were either in prison or were carefully keeping out of Ireland.

The Land Courts had been opened, and were overcrowded with applicants for justice. The Land League meetings had been to a large extent abandoned, and, though there had been one rough struggle in the streets of Dublin between the police and the mob, the authorities felt that they could answer for the maintenance of public order. All this was to the good; and if this had been all, Forster would have been able to congratulate himself upon the brilliant success of the course which the Executive was pursuing.

But that other force which has always played so important a part in Irish agrarian agitations, and which is never so potent as during the long, dark nights of winter, now seemed to awake to a renewed term of active life. Whilst the Irish leaders were in retirement in Kilmainham—for it is difficult to speak of their detention there, under circumstances of personal ease and comfort, in the terms which are applicable to an ordinary imprisonment,—and whilst the meetings of the Land League had of necessity come to an end, gangs of desperate men, who believed themselves to be carrying out the policy and furthering the work of Mr. Parnell and his colleagues, were engaged in establishing a system of organized terrorism over a great portion of the country. Bands of "moonlighters," men masked and armed, roamed over the poverty-stricken hillsides and the lonely highways of Connaught and Munster, carrying out the

decrees of secret courts formed in every hamlet for the purpose of enforcing the "unwritten law" of the suppressed league. The victims of these bodies of secret assassins were not the landlords or the wealthy. They were men of the same rank in life as their murderers—cottiers and small farmers, people whose lives had been one long struggle against starvation, and whose abject poverty and misery might well—it might have been thought—have exempted them from the cruel persecutions of their neighbours. But nothing could protect any man who had incurred the vengeance of these secret emissaries of the suppressed league.

The outrages which had marked the previous winter were renewed upon a larger scale. During the month of October, 1881, three murders were committed in the province of Munster, the particulars of which may be mentioned, as they are typical of the crimes of the outrage-mongers, Michael Moloney, a farmer in County Clare, when sitting in his bedroom at seven o'clock in the evening, was shot dead by some one who thrust the muzzle of his gun through the window and deliberately took aim at his victim. Moloney's crime was that he had paid his rent. In the same county, two days later, Thomas McMahon, a farmer, was found in the cowhouse of a neighbour, lying dead with a bullet in his brain. From the information which they gathered, the police arrived at the conclusion that McMahon had been put to death at a secret

meeting of moonlighters, because he had refused to join in an outrage on the estate on which he lived. In County Cork, a farmer's son, named Patrick Leary, was shot dead by a party of men who were going round among the tenants on a certain estate, cautioning them against paying their rents. Leary was in the house of one of these tenants when the moonlighters arrived. They believed that he was a detective, and instantly shot him. These are typical instances of the murders which were reported to Forster from different parts of the country. But in addition to actual murders there were many cases of firing at individuals or into dwelling-houses which did not result in death; there were daily instances of incendiary fires and the mutilation of cattle; whilst threatening letters were scattered broadcast throughout the disturbed districts.

To MR. GLADSTONE.

"Chief Secretary's Lodge, Phœnix Park, Dublin,
"November 20th, 1881.

"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"In your letter of the 17th inst. you ask for particulars of a case of bodily outrage inflicted for payment of rent, supposing it to be the first case. I am sorry to say this is no novelty. I send you the confidential return of aggravated outrages for October, in which you will find one

murder and four firings into dwellings, believed to have been perpetrated as punishment for paying rents. I am sorry to say there is a turn decidedly for the worse, and we are going to have a most anxious winter. It is now but too clear that, in in many counties, we shall have to compel the tenants to submit to the law. Our first duty will be to send so large a force with the sheriff's officer as will secure either payment of rent or eviction. This, though requiring careful organization, will be our least difficulty. The party of robbers rely, and rightly rely, much more on the terror caused by outrage than on open resistance.

"The disease with which we have to contend is so deep-seated, that it changes its form from day to day, according to our treatment. Boycotting, so far as it is exclusive dealing, is an open outrage, and our late action has much checked it. And now we have more secret outrages and attempts to murder. We must meet this as best we can by (1) more soldiers and billeting of them; (2) economizing our police force; (3) multiplying arrests under Protection Act.

"We must aim at locking up all murder planners, and such patrolling as will make night outrages impossible; but these ideals are not easily realized. However, I hope to realize them so far that the tenant will generally think the Land Court the best alternative. But then we must have the courts throughout Ireland, at any

rate in every disturbed county; and I write to-day to Frederick Cavendish to that effect.

"You will again ask, Is it not possible to get outside aid to the soldiers or police? I can assure you that it is not possible for any one to have thought or said more about this than I have done the last few days. I lose no opportunity of pressing for it, but as yet without success.

"There is one thing I think we may do, somewhat in this direction. A large number of police are employed in personal protection. This does not require training, only honest fidelity and courage, and we think of getting extra men for this duty, giving the preference to constabulary and army pensioners. . . .

"One word about myself. If we could get the country quiet, I should be anxious to leave Ireland. While we are fighting for law and order, I cannot desert my post; but this battle over, and the Land Act well at work, I am quite sure that the best course for Ireland, as well as for myself, would be my replacement by some one not tarred by the coercion brush. But alas! it is but too probable that the battle will not be won when Parliament meets, and that, instead of releasing the suspects, we shall have to consider whether we renew the Protection Act, or replace it by some other form of repression.

"Yours very truly,

"W. E. FORSTER."

It was undoubtedly the discouragement he felt at the spread of the outrages which led Forster thus openly to suggest to Mr. Gladstone his retirement from his post. To have been compelled to give up his plans for conciliating Irish opinion, and to resort to repression and coercion in order to maintain order, and then to find that even with coercion he could not put down outrage of a cruel and cowardly kind, was indeed bitter to him. Mr. Gladstone wrote, by return of post, to acknowledge his "very grave letter," which he thought ought to be laid before the Cabinet. "With regard to your leaving Ireland," the Prime Minister continued, "there is an analogy between your position and mine. Virtually abandoning the hope of vital change for the better during the winter, I come on my own behalf to an anticipation projected a little further into the future—that after the winter things may mend, and that my own retirement may give facilities for the fulfilment of your very natural desire."

It was a day or two after this that, in another letter, Mr. Gladstone congratulated Forster upon the manner in which he had accomplished a difficult and delicate piece of work in connection with the Irish Executive. "It is not every man," he wrote, "who in difficult circumstances can keep a cool head with a warm heart; and this is what you are doing." Words like these must have encouraged him; for in Ireland the

prospect was very dark, and in England his opponents—some of whom professed to be his own friends—were very active. The outrages were increasing in number, although the powers of the Protection Act were now being used with an unsparing hand, and large additions were being made to the prisoners in Kilmainham and elsewhere. But it was not merely the league and its emissaries, social and open, with whom he had to contend. He had done his best to give effect to Mr. Gladstone's wish, and to rally the loyal part of the population in support of the law, and he had found that party feeling ran far too high to make any such movement possible. The landowners were bitter against the Government, and the Tory aristocracy of Ireland heaped reproaches upon the Chief Secretary because he was not resolute enough and severe enough in his action against the followers of the league. In England he was being assailed for having suspended constitutional government, and already a faction of the Liberal party were demanding his removal from his post, on the ground that he was neither more nor less than a despot. Nobody knew better than he did that he was governing rather as an absolute than as a Constitutional ruler; and nobody deplored the fact more strongly. He was not unprepared for the unfriendly criticisms of those who, being either unable or unwilling to take the difficulties of his position and the necessities of the Irish problem

into account, called him sharply to task for his violation of the fundamental commonplaces of the Liberal creed. But it was, perhaps, still harder for him to have to submit to the ignorant and, in some cases, insolent censures of those men who, while regarding themselves as the bulwarks of law and order in Ireland, refused to lift a finger in order to aid the Government in the work of maintaining that law and order, and contented themselves with criticizing every step taken by the Executive.

Here, for example, is a letter addressed by a peer of wealth and great influence to Mr. Forster during the month of November, 1881: "We, who are anxious to support the Lord-Lieutenant and his advisers in maintaining law and order in this country, cannot understand the action of the Government in remitting the sentence passed upon the brutal murderer of a peace-officer on duty. At a moment when perverse magistrates and perverse juries are straining the law against the constabulary, this mistaken clemency is a direct encouragement to the disorderly and disaffected masses to continue their career of violence. Every release of a suspect, every remission of a sentence in such a case, is a triumph to the lawless at the expense of the law-abiding." This crude attempt to incite Forster and the Executive to a course of relentless severity, without regard to the merits of each particular case, affords a fair sample of the cha-

racter of the support which the Castle had during that winter from many of those who posed as the special champions and representatives of law and order. In his reply to this letter, Forster, after referring the writer to the Lord-Lieutenant on the question of the remission of a capital sentence, continued, "For the arrests and release of suspects I am responsible, and to the best of my belief I have had good reasons for my action in every case, and I cannot consider that it would be either wise or just to lay down the rule which you suggest that every release of a suspect is a triumph to the lawless. There could, in my opinion, be no greater triumph to the lawless than the departure of the Government from the impartial consideration of each case on its merits."

The "impartial consideration" of the cases of the suspects was indeed one of the heaviest pieces of work imposed upon him at this time. He was in constant consultation with his law advisers upon each individual case. The fact that these men were imprisoned at *his* pleasure, and that his alone was the voice that could order their release, laid upon him a responsibility the extent of which he never sought to underestimate; and in spite of taunts and sneers on the one side, and threats, abuse, and entreaties on the other, he strove resolutely, with a dogged tenacity and perseverance, to do justice towards each of the hundreds of men who now lay in gaol under his

warrant. Their detention, moreover, imposed upon him a heavy amount of detail work. Unconvicted and untried, they could not be treated as guilty men, and he was most anxious in his dealings with them to show all the consideration and forbearance consistent with the faithful discharge of his duty to the State. Daily there came to him applications for some relaxation of the prison rules, for permission to receive particular visitors, or even to quit the prison on parole; and each of these was carefully considered, and dealt with on its merits. The health, too, of the suspects was constantly noted, and whenever it could be shown that confinement was seriously injuring the suspect, his release was ordered. In this manner Mr. Sexton was released from Kilmainham, after his imprisonment had lasted but a few weeks.

But pressing and urgent as were the duties which were thus accumulated upon Forster's head at this time, he might have discharged them all with comparative ease if it had not been for the pain inflicted upon him by the social demoralization of the country. Day after day he had to listen to stories of outrage, intimidations, ingratitude, and ruin. The personal appeals he received from the victims of the terror sank deep into his heart. These poor creatures looked to him to save them, as they had done twelve months before. He spared himself in their service neither by day nor by night. At every hour of the day he

was engaged in stimulating the magistrates and the other executive officers to a more vigorous discharge of their duties; he was constantly conferring with the military authorities on the subject of reinforcements to lighten the work of the overtasked constabulary, and he was keeping up regular communication, not merely with his principal advisers and agents at the Castle, but with the representatives of the Crown in all parts of the country. Only those who were with him then can know how heavy the burden laid upon him was—the double burden of work and responsibility. "They talk of the Czar of Russia," he said one day after his retirement from office, "but the Czar is not more of a personal and absolute ruler than I was during that last winter in Ireland. My colleagues left me to do as I pleased, and the whole thing was on my hands." It seemed to those who were watching him at this time, whilst dangers, difficulties, and embarrassments accumulated around him, that he was trying to do the work not of one man but of ten.

At last the strain began to tell, even upon his great strength and power of work. During December the entries in his daughter's diary regarding him refer frequently to his worn and weary appearance. He found himself, for the first time in his life, lapsing into an occasional short doze, even when persons were engaged with him on business. The burden was very heavy, and the gloom was deepening.

A graphic outside sketch of Mr. Forster's opinions at this critical period is to be found in a letter written by one of his relatives, who was his guest for a few days.

"December 14th, 1881.

"DEAR ——,

"We left London in greasy fog, and passed through sharp frost in the shires to half a gale of wind at Holyhead. We got here to breakfast at twelve. I walked to the Park gates (about two miles) with W. E. F. He seemed in good form, resolute and clear, and talked very freely. First he showed me the Under-Secretary's house, marvelling that I did not know about him. His name is Burke, and he virtually is what people talk about as 'The Castle.' I then asked him whether there would not be a difficulty in keeping M.P.s locked up during the session. He said it would be awkward, no doubt; but it had already been done in Dillon's case, and that, whatever might be said, he had to secure the peace of the country; and that was of immeasurably greater importance than avoiding a taunt; that he had no power to deport them to England, and if he had, and they returned by the next boat, he could not arrest them again unless they did some overt act. He is hatching a plan (which is not yet out, and must not be spoken of in public) to put one good man (I suppose a high constabulary officer, or stipendiary magistrate)

over pairs of counties, giving him great powers, and making him responsible for the peace there. He has nearly carried this through, with a terrible slaughter of red tape in the process.

"Then as to boycotting; it was very doubtful if it came within the Act, but the lawyers have held that it does, and wherever the inspectors reported it prevalent, and due to League organization, he has arrested the ringleaders (fifty or sixty altogether), and it has had an excellent effect. Of crime there is less than this time last year.

". . . He agreed that Mr. Gladstone might have mentioned the Property Defence Association at Leeds, but it had then done very little. What had been to the front was the Emergency Committee, and that was a purely Orange emanation, which made it very difficult for him to pat it on the back. He approved of the Lord Mayor's Fund, and had encouraged the bigwigs to support it; but agreed that the detestable tone of the Tory papers, making out that it was to do what *Government* ought to do, made it very difficult for a Liberal to support it. He said that, throughout, the Tory papers had ignored *Ireland* altogether, except so far as they could use it as a weapon for party warfare. Also that the landlords were very remiss in taking their own part. The Government wish them to serve notices and proceed to evictions in the worst cases only, asking them to do it on a systematic plan, so that they may always be ready

to back them with overwhelming force; but they won't in many cases. He is increasing the proportion of military to police in these expeditions, to the disgust of the Horse Guards, but to the setting free of the constabulary for night patrol duty. . . . As to compensation to landlords, I asked him whether the real answer to the claim was not that on the whole they are greatly benefited by the Act, as they would not get any rents at all without it? He said certainly. No Government in the world, be it Noah, Daniel, or Job (to say nothing of Bismarck or Jim Lowther), could collect all the rents in perpetuity. Troops may carry out evictions but they cannot stay there to prevent reoccupation. A *modus vivendi* with the tenants is essential to the landlords, and that could not be acquired at a less cost than the Act."

To MR. GLADSTONE.

"Chief Secretary's Lodge, Phœnix Park, Dublin,
"December 11th, 1881.

"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"To-day all I can do is to return Lord ——'s letter. To some extent his letter is an exaggeration. Many of the nightly attacks are shams, got up as an excuse for non-payment of rent; but there are others of great atrocity. I believe I am doing all that can be done to secure more efficient patrolling. . . . I have also been

doing my best to get processes served by post instead of by escort, and enclose circular also on that matter. I also enclose an advertisement for temporary police.

"I am planning also another step, which I hope to carry out this week, which is to divide the district counties into, say, six districts, and to appoint in each district a temporary commissioner who shall be responsible to me for the peace of his district and for the aid of all the powers which the Executive possess.

"This means breaking through many etiquettes and many yards of red tape, but I think it now a necessity.

"There will be a slight pull upon the Treasury, but not much. I have been talking to Spencer about it, and he fully agrees.

"Yours very truly,

"W. E. FORSTER."

This appointment of "special magistrates" he justly regarded as one of the most important of all the measures which he took for the maintenance of law and order whilst in Ireland. It enabled him to give the ablest men in the service—such men as Mr. Clifford Lloyd and Mr. Blake—free scope for their energies; and unquestionably its good effect—not fully felt until after his own retirement from office—began to make itself apparent very soon after the step was taken.

Amid all that engaged his attention at this time he did not forget his old friends.

To Mrs. C. Fox.

"Chief Secretary's Lodge, Dublin,
"December 22nd, 1881.

"My dear Friend,

"From day to day I have put off thanking thee for thy precious note of the 11th inst., and for the accompanying gift of Caroline's 'Journal,' in the hope of being able to say how I value this gift, both in itself and from thee. But I have no time to do anything except my work, and not time for that.

"Little did these dear friends of my youth—she and Barclay and Anna Maria—think what would fall on their companion in after-life, in responsibilities, abuse, and difficulty.

"I have to struggle very hard for law and justice against every kind of injustice and selfishness and unreason; but I am more and more hopeful that, in the end, truth and order will prevail. Meantime, it is pleasant to be so vividly reminded of that bright, clear intellect, with its quick perceptions and graceful wit, and of that warm, unselfish heart; and it is touching to have her brother, whose friendship is one of my bright memories, again brought before me; and I love to have thee and thine, my dearest friend, in my thoughts when I can think of anything but Land

Leaguers and outrages and evicted tenants. But I do often think of thee in thy bed of sore-sickness and pain, and feel for thee and grieve for thee, and also am thankful for thee that thou art preserved in patience to endure, and to be yet, as of old, a help to those around thee.

"But I must hasten into the Castle, and so can only end with dear love and sincere thanks.

"Thy very affectionate friend,

"W. E. FORSTER."

"A quiet Christmas," wrote Mr. Gladstone on December 23rd, "I dare not wish you; but I do hope and think this Christmas will come to you not without consolations and the apparent dawn of favourable expectations." "Mine is a more modest wish," said Forster when, on the morning of January 1st, 1882, some one wished him a "happy new year:" "it is that it may be a less bad year than the last."

CHAPTER IX.

CLOSING DAYS IN IRELAND.

In the early part of January, 1882, Mr. Forster crossed to London in order to meet his colleagues and discuss the Irish question and its difficulties with them. The opportunity furnished by his presence in England was seized by the Queen to invite him to Osborne, and he was thus enabled to explain personally to her Majesty many circumstances connected with the administration of Irish affairs on which it was hardly possible for those at a distance to form an accurate judgment. His visit cheered and strengthened him, and he returned to Ireland, on January 11th, in good spirits.

Yet the most trying and anxious days of his official career were now approaching. The meeting of Parliament was at hand, and already it had become evident that the session would be a stormy one. In all quarters attacks upon the Chief Secretary seemed to be in course of preparation. The Protection Act had not put an end to the outrages, despite the fact that hundreds of

prisoners, including Mr. Parnell and other members of Parliament, were now under lock and key. The appointment of special magistrates, which was the most important step Mr. Forster had taken for the purpose of strengthening the hands of the authorities, had just been made, and its full effects could not yet be perceived. Above all, the Protection Act would expire during the year, and consequently ministers must either decide to allow it to lapse, or must ask Parliament to spend weeks or possibly months in renewing it. There is no need to feel surprise at the fact that people began openly to talk about the "failure" of coercion as administered by Mr. Forster. A large section of the Radicals had consented with great reluctance to the policy of the Protection Act. They now pointed eagerly to its failure to put an end to outrages as a proof that Ireland could not be dealt with successfully in this manner. There were others who, without denouncing every species of coercion, were eager to charge upon the head of Mr. Forster himself the full responsibility for the unsatisfactory state of things in Ireland. These were to be found among the men who had on many previous occasions differed from him, and who seemed eager now to seize the opportunity of striking at him. It is certain that small allowance was made in some quarters for the overwhelming difficulties of the situation, and that an ignorant impatience prevailed among men who seemed to

believe that the Irish question was one which any capable administrator might solve in the course of a single winter if he only gave his mind to it.

Up to this point, though Forster had been bitterly and indeed brutally attacked by the Nationalist party in Ireland, his chief opponents in England had been the landlords, and those who accused him of being too gentle in his methods of dealing with Irish lawlessness. Now, however, he had to submit to the attacks of those who professed to be his own political friends and supporters. From the very earliest days of his Chief Secretaryship it had been the manifest desire of Mr. Parnell and his party to separate him from his colleagues. The English public was asked to believe that the Irish policy of the Government was not the policy of Mr. Gladstone, or Mr. Bright, or Mr. Chamberlain, but the policy of Mr. Forster alone, and every effort was made to alienate from the Chief Secretary the sympathies of his own party. Hitherto, these attempts had met with a very partial and limited success; but as the long, dark winter of 1881 crept slowly onwards, and as day by day brought fresh tales of horror from the centres of agitation in Ireland, the policy of Forster's enemies began steadily to advance, and some of the most bitter and uncompromising of his critics showed themselves among writers and speakers attached to the Liberal party in England. One word must be said here upon the proposition set forth with so much

zeal in certain quarters in this country, that the Irish policy of the Ministry down to this winter of 1881–82, had been the policy of Mr. Forster alone. The statement is absolutely false. Upon Forster's shoulders were laid the labour and the responsibility—one may add the odium also—of carrying that policy into effect; but it was a policy deliberately adopted by the Cabinet as a whole. Nay, in some respects it was more fully the policy of his colleagues than of himself. In the one great struggle which had taken place within the Cabinet, that of the autumn of 1880, it was Forster who had been compelled to yield. The fact will be made clear in the subsequent course of this narrative by the letters which I am permitted to publish, but it is well that at this point, when I am dealing with the attacks which were made upon Mr. Forster by powerful Liberals in England, I should state the truth. During January and February, 1882, when day by day Forster found himself assailed with almost as much bitterness in the press of London as in the Nationalist press of Dublin, and when every effort was being made to induce the English people to believe that he alone was responsible for the failure to restore peace and contentment in Ireland, he was manfully striving to carry out the policy of the Cabinet as a whole.

When Parliament met, on February 7th, there was a gleam of brightness visible amid the deep gloom that brooded over Ireland. The number

of outrages was diminishing. In December, 229 outrages, exclusive of threatening letters, had been reported, as compared with 257 in the month of November, and 385 in December, 1880. January showed a further reduction to 189; and it was made clear that the appointment of the special magistrates was beginning to have some effect. In the Queen's Speech it was stated that "the condition of Ireland showed signs of improvement, and encouraged the hope that perseverance in the course hitherto pursued would be rewarded with the happy results which were so much to be desired." The administration of justice, the Speech declared, had been more efficient, and organized intimidation was diminishing.

But though there was thus evidence of some improvement in the general condition of the country, it cannot be said that in his personal experiences Forster had at this time much reason to congratulate himself. Not only was it evident that a party existed in England which was determined to discredit him and drive him from office, but it also became clear that the anger of the extreme members of the revolutionary party in Ireland had reached a dangerous pitch, and that at any moment they might seek to avenge themselves upon the man who was the representative of English rule in Dublin. It was at this time that the attempt to injure Forster by means of an explosive letter, of which an account by his

private secretary, Mr. Jephson, is given on a previous page, was made; and the police knew that desperate men were banded together for the purpose of procuring his assassination. In London, as well as in Dublin, the authorities had grave reason to fear for his safety, and they insisted upon taking precautions to guard him against outrage. Unfortunately they could not guard him against trials which were infinitely harder to be borne than any risk of murder. All through his tenure of office he had been compelled again and again to complain of the mistakes of subordinates in Ireland. It sometimes seemed, indeed, as though equally in small things and in great a perverse fate pursued the Executive. Immediately after coming to town for the meeting of Parliament an annoying incident occurred, which attracted not a little notice at the time. This was the publication, under the authority of the Land Commission, of a pamphlet entitled, "How to become Owner of your Farm," in which the suppressed Land League was extolled. There is no need to go into the particulars of the affair, which led to the resignation of the solicitor to the Land Commission, Mr. Fotterel, but it was one which at the time added greatly to Forster's anxiety.

Attacks upon his administration began with the debate upon the address. Three Irish members, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Dillon, and Mr. O'Kelly, were in

prison, and this fact alone seemed to the Parnellite members to justify the most direct and uncompromising attacks upon the Irish policy of the Government. Forster spoke during the second night of the debate on the address in his own defence. In the course of his speech he made it clear that in his eyes the worst offence of Mr. Parnell was not the advice which he had given to the Irish people, but the means by which that advice was being enforced by his followers, namely, intimidation, boycotting, and outrages. It was because he believed that Mr. Parnell had incited to intimidation that he had felt it necessary to advise his arrest. It was for the same reason that he had been compelled to suppress the Land League. In concluding his speech, Forster took occasion to refer to the sub-commissioners who were engaged in carrying out the work of the Land Court. The appointment of these officials had been one of the most serious pieces of work laid upon him in the previous autumn, and he had been freely criticized alike by the landlord party and the tenants for the choice he had made. Some of the sub-commissioners might have given reason by their proceedings for these criticisms; but in the main they had done their work admirably, and Forster gave the House a warm justification of their character and conduct.

It was not in the House of Commons alone, however, that the Irish policy of ministers was

attacked. In the House of Lords a motion was brought forward by Lord Donoughmore for the appointment of a select committee to inquire into the working of the Land Act—which had been barely four months in operation! In spite of the strenuous protests of the representatives of the Government in the Upper House, the resolution was carried by 96 votes to 53. Here was a direct attack upon the Act of the most formidable kind, an attack different indeed in character, but equal in gravity to that which had been made upon the same measure by Mr. Parnell. The House of Lords had the right to appoint such a committee if it pleased; but ministers, also exercising their right, refused to take any part in its work, or to be represented upon it. The committee had power to summon any persons it pleased as witnesses, and it was evident that it also lay within its power to stop the working of the Land Act at the most critical moment. A question immediately arose as to whether, if Mr. Forster were summoned to give evidence before the committee, he should obey the summons.

To MR. GLADSTONE.

"80, Eccleston Square, S.W., February 26th, 1882.

"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"I was sorry to learn from Hamilton, this afternoon, that Northcote appears determined to resist all compromise. I confess, I begin to think

that Harcourt is right, and that a minister ought not to be put in the position of defending himself before a committee.

"Of course, if the House of Commons appointed such committee after resistance by the Ministry, the whole Ministry would resign, and, if the Ministry did not resist such motion, the attacked minister would resign.

"The question is, Am I to attend before the Lords' Committee and there defend myself? For instance, am I to answer such questions as these? 'For what reasons did you appoint the sub-commissioners? What pains did you take to ascertain their fitness?'

"I doubt whether a minister ought to allow himself to be tried by a committee of the House of Lords. If not, there are two modes of meeting this matter: (1) I could cease to be a minister—but I fear that course is not possible—would it were; or (2) the Government might oppose the motion for leave for me as member of the House to attend before the committee.

"Upon that motion I could challenge attack in the Commons, and declare my anxiety to defend myself in my own House. It is by no means certain that the Lords' Committee will summon me to attend; and if they do, I do not know that my refusal to attend is precluded by the words Granville used on Friday.

"I am sure you will feel that I do not raise the

question from any personal feeling, but simply from the wish that the position of a minister should not be unduly assailed.

"Yours very truly,

"W. E. FORSTER."

The Cabinet decided that it would be better on the whole for Mr. Forster to refuse to attend before the committee. The challenge of the Lords was taken up by the Government in the House of Commons, and a resolution moved by Mr. Gladstone, declaring that any inquiry at that time into the working of the Land Act would defeat its operation, and must be injurious to the interests of good government in Ireland, was carried by a majority of 303 to 235.

Whilst this controversy was being carried on between the Government and the House of Lords, Mr. Forster was engaged in very different work at a distance from London. The state of things in the county of Clare was exceptionally bad. The south-west, indeed, was the centre of outrage and resistance to the law. Forster determined that he would himself go down into Clare, Limerick, and Galway, in order that he might see the state of the country with his own eyes. When he first expressed his intention of making the journey, not a little opposition was offered by his colleagues, who were naturally anxious lest he should suffer violence whilst visiting places so notorious in the annals

of political and agrarian crime. Their anxiety was increased by the fact that he was determined, as far as possible, to do without police protection. Nevertheless he persisted in his purpose, and his journey to Clare, so far from ending in the dreaded disaster, formed one of the brightest incidents in his career as Chief Secretary. There is no need to dwell upon the personal courage which was shown in facing dangers the reality of which was brought home, in only too terrible a manner, to the mind of the country a few weeks later. Nor is it necessary to add more than a few words to the picture of his journey as it is given in his own letters. He had made up his mind to see the worst that could be shown in Ireland with his own eyes; he was anxious, too, to come into close contact with the people of a district where the terror of the Land League seemed supreme. So he set forth on his journey with great confidence in an overruling Providence; his chief anxiety being lest, in spite of his orders to the contrary, a police escort might be provided for him.

To MR. GLADSTONE.

"Limerick, March 1st, 1882.

"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"My private secretary will send you a copy of my letter to Cairns, written as you suggest. Lloyd has met me here, and I think I do right to go on to Clare.

"It is very difficult to realize the real position without a personal visit, and no doubt this district in East Clare is just now the worst in Ireland—being possessed by a secret society, partly treasonable, partly murderous.

"I heard good news as I came down. I met at Limerick Junction one of the largest agents in the south, a man whom I know to be a very reasonable one, who told me he had just got in rents on a large estate near Tipperary on the agreement of three-fourths down and twenty-five per cent. to depend on the Land Court. This is important, as when I was in Ireland last week Tipperary town and neighbourhood was the worst district in the counties of Tipperary, Waterford, and East Clare.

"If we can get Clare quiet I shall be hopeful.

"Yours very truly,

"W. E. FORSTER.

"My private secretary at Irish Office will know my address."

To his Wife.

"Tulla, March 2nd, 1882.

"I must send one line, my dearest, though only one line. We drove over last evening, a wild drive of twenty miles in a storm of rain—three cars of police pursuing us. I did all I could to diminish the number. . . .

"Here we have a small public-house, kept by

the only loyal man in the place—an Orange-Protestant from Derry, now vehemently boycotted.

"To-day I have been seeing head constables from the neighbourhood; the poor man in the workhouse hospital who was nearly shot to pieces last Saturday, and who must, I fear, die; the policeman who was hit when Lieutenant Lloyd was fired at; the Dispensary doctor, etc.

"We drove out to call on Colonel O'Callaghan—finding him barricaded as Becher described, but now guarded by Scots Greys instead of police. . . . I have now made a long call on the priest and his curate, who tell me the other side. There *is* another side; but I have given them my mind, as I did in a short speech to a number of men I found under a shed; . . . I am very well, liking the picnic; my bed a mattress on seven chairs, but comfortable.

"Thine,

"W. E. Forster."

The short speech which Forster made under the shed at Tulla has been described with graphic force by Captain Ross, of Bladensburg, who was one of his attendants during the journey. Quite unaccompanied, Forster, when returning from his call on the priest, walked to a shed where he saw a number of men sheltering from the rain, told them his name, and then in pithy and forcible terms remonstrated with them on their silent

acquiescence in the reign of terror organized by the agitators. The men, who received him with looks of surprise, heard him in silence, and uncovered their heads respectfully when, having spoken his mind, he left them.

To his Wife.

"Athenry, March 3rd, 1882.

"Just now this is the worst bit of Galway, but it is fair day, and I have been in among the crowd by myself, chatting with a ring of men around me. . . .

"We had a cypher telegram at Tulla yesterday which greatly perplexed our wits; but the result was that I telegraphed to Cairns that, having heard from my colleagues, I cannot consent to attend the committee. We had no police escort yesterday from Tulla to Ennis. It cleared up, and I had a pleasant drive in Lloyd's dog-cart for ten miles."

From H. O. Arnold Forster, *written at the same time.*

"Our first point in our drive was to the workhouse, where father visited the poor fellow who was so brutally attacked the other day. I am afraid he was dying. It was a painful and dreadful sight, and made doubly so by the poor man's pathetic story of the outrage—of his wife's appeal to the murderers to spare him, and by his sorrow on behalf of his six little children. Father gave

him £10 for his wife, and said a few words to him which I am sure must have comforted him not a little, and which indeed touched everybody. . . . To-day we are on our way to Athenry. Father is very well, and glad to have come here. People, of course, eye him very curiously, but everybody has been civil enough."

To his Wife.

"Limerick Junction, March 4th, 1882.

"One very short line to say we are quite well, and I am more cheery about the country than I have been since I came down. Rents are being paid in the worst districts, and the worst ruffians are bolting.

"The five special magistrates have just met me here, and all bring good accounts.

"I am very glad to say I have just got a telegram from Jephson, with a message from Gladstone that I need not come back for Monday's debate.

"With dearest love to you all,

"Thine,

"W. E. FORSTER."

"Portarlington, March 5th, 1882.

"MY DEAREST WIFE,

"We are spending here a quiet, restful day. Mrs. Blake is really a delightful hostess.

"To-morrow morning I go to Tullamore, the

centre of the worst part of King's County, where I hope to make a speech. Blake entirely agrees with me that I must be unpoliced, and trust to the people."

The journey caused immense excitement in Ireland, and aroused a corresponding degree of interest in England. The spectacle presented by the Chief Secretary, the hated "Buckshot" of the Parnellites, walking about unarmed and without police escorts in such places as Tulla and Athenry and talking to the groups of farmers and labourers whom he encountered in the streets and market-places, was indeed calculated to excite amazement in the breasts both of Irishmen and Englishmen. Hitherto the belief had been that Mr. Forster's life was not safe even within the walls of Dublin Castle; whilst, if the Nationalist newspapers were to be credited, the feeling entertained towards him by the overwhelming mass of the Irish people was such that it would have been impossible for him to appear in public without being insulted. Yet here he was, in the worst part of Ireland, meeting with civility, and absolutely unharmed. It is not strange that at the moment people supposed that the dangers of his journey must have been exaggerated, and that after all there was no reason to fear the presence of the political assassin on Irish soil. The Nationalist newspapers, it need hardly be said, pursued him with

venomous abuse whilst he was on this brief but adventurous journey. They misrepresented his motives, and, though unable to deny his courage, they found vent for their rage in declaring him to be a person notorious for ferocious brutality.

It was at Tullamore that the most interesting event connected with the journey took place. Before me, as I write, lies a sheet printed at Limerick, and bearing the following title, "This speech was made by the Right Honourable W. E. Forster, M.P., Chief Secretary for Ireland, at an open-air meeting in Tullamore, in the King's County, on the 6th March, 1882." Before making his speech, Forster walked alone through the streets, the people eyeing him with unconcealed curiosity, but not offering to molest him in any way. As in the other towns he had visited, he had interviews here with the parish priest and his curates, and with other persons of influence. Then he went to the Convent Schools, and spent some time in examining the girls who were being taught there. By this time his presence in the town was generally known, and a crowd followed him on his way back to the hotel. Tullamore was the centre of one of the "outrage districts." The people seemed too much surprised, however, to do more than stare at him vigorously. Pressing upon his heels, they accompanied him to the hotel, and waited outside in gathering numbers whilst he lunched. After luncheon, he addressed them from

the window of the house. It was a speech in its way unique; and it is impossible for any one acquainted with Forster's history not to be carried back when reading it to those early days in Bradford when he was engaged in combating the "physical force" party among the Chartists, and trying to win by reason and persuasion those whom most were disposed simply to abuse.

After a few prefatory words to the Tullamore crowd, he said, "Seeing you here, I should like to say a word or two as to why I have come down from Dublin into the country." [A Voice: "And we admire your pluck!"] "I have been down in Limerick, and in Clare, and in Galway, and the reason why I came down was this, that I wanted to see whether, coming down for myself, and seeing what the state of things was, would enable me to do my work better. My work at this present moment is to prevent men having outrages committed upon them; to prevent their being threatened and ill-treated when going through their daily work; to enable a man to earn his living if he chooses, to earn it without being frightened by anybody else from doing that; and, above all, to prevent, and if possible put a stop to, what has been happening in many parts of Ireland —I hope not here, but I am afraid there have been one or two cases not far from here,—to put a stop to what has taken place in other parts of Ireland, especially where I have been within the

last day or two, viz. those violent outrages, maiming and killing people because they have been doing what they had a perfect right to do, and in some cases because they had been doing what it was their duty to do—paying their lawful debts—or even because they were suspected of it."

He had come to the conclusion, he went on, that this intimidation might be put down if the people themselves would unite to resist it. "The people of this district have it in their own power to stop these outrages, which are a disgrace to the name of Ireland, and which, allow me to say—for I would not have come here to talk to you at all, if I would not say before your faces precisely and exactly what I would say behind your backs in the Imperial House of Parliament—I have come here to say to you exactly what I would say to you there—namely this, that such things would not happen either in England or in Scotland, and I do not believe they would happen in any country on the continent. There are no more courageous men in the world in battle, under discipline, than are the Irish." [A voice: "Soft solder. Release the prisoners!"] "Perhaps you will wait until I come to an end. I do not know why you should be angry, if you are, at my saying you are courageous men; but perhaps if you are angry at that you will be pleased with what I am going to say now—that though there are no more courageous men in battle than the Irish, there is

one want among the Irish people, and that is the want of moral courage—a want of that determination to stand against a majority round them, or even a noisy or violent minority round them."

Why did they allow themselves to be terrorized? why did they not unite to stop it? he asked. "A great many of you, I know, must feel that it is doing great harm—that it is interfering with your employment, and that no good can come of it. If that is the case, I say help the Government to prevent these outrages. But whether you do or not, it is our duty to stop them. That is the duty of the Government, and it is specially my duty. And stop them we will." Assuming that there might be some one in the crowd who looked with approval upon these outrages, he would like to tell him what were the forces arrayed against the authors of the crimes. "They have got the Irish Government—though perhaps they think they can defy that; they have got the Imperial Parliament; they have got the people of Great Britain, who are determined that these outrages shall cease; and they have got a stronger force against them than the Irish Government, or Parliament, or the British people—they have got against them the force of God's laws."

Mr. Forster then spoke of himself, of the evil which had been spoken of him since he came to Ireland as Chief Secretary, and of his visit to the country at the time of the famine. "I was de-

termined to do what I could, after seeing the misery in the west, to get an alteration in the laws. We have got an alteration in the laws, and all of you will acknowledge that we have now got two boons, as I may say,—I will not call them boons, but two acts of justice, which three or four years ago you did not expect to get. One is that we have men going through the country everywhere who are saying what a fair rent is to be, and in very many cases largely lowering the rent; and the other is that the want of security which the farmers felt in past years no longer exists." He was glad to think that such a change in the laws had been accomplished. But he must speak of another Irish experience of his. "I have just come back from Clare, and I will tell you what I saw there—it will stick in my memory for the rest of my life, as an eviction which I saw thirty years ago will stick in my memory for the rest of my life. I have done all I can to make it unlikely, to make it difficult, that there should be evictions in the future, and I will do what I can to make it difficult that that shall happen again which happened in Clare, which I almost saw happen within the last three or four days. I went, when I was at Tulla, to the workhouse, and there I saw a poor fellow lying in bed, the doctors round him, with a blue light over his face that made me feel that the doctors were not right when they told me that he might get over it. I felt sure

that he must die, and I see this morning that he has died. But why did that man die? He was a poor lone farmer. I believe he had paid his rent —I believe he had committed that crime. He thought it his duty to pay. Fifteen or sixteen men broke into his house in the middle of the night, pulled him out of his bed, and told him they would punish him. He himself, lying in his death agony as it were, told me the story. He said, 'My wife went down on her knees, and said, 'Here are five helpless children, will you kill their father?' They took him out; they discharged a gun filled with shot into his leg, so closely that it shattered his leg. . . . Well, I will state that that is a state of things that, so coming on what I have heard, will dwell with me all the rest of my life, and if I can do anything to prevent these things happening, whatever hard opinion you may think of me or say of me, the time will come when the Irish people will be thankful that they were stopped."

The concluding passage of the speech was as follows:—"I will just end with these words—God save Ireland. . . . God save Ireland from enemies outside her border and from those within. God save Ireland from cruel men, of whatever class they be—and I trust there are very few—grasping landlords, or dishonest tenants, or midnight marauders. God save Ireland from the pestilence that walketh at noon, and the terror that stealeth

at night. And I believe that God will save Ireland; for with all her faults there is that amount of virtue among the Irish people—there is that love of their country, that love and devotion of men to their families—that willingness to sacrifice for them, which are abiding and homely virtues that do much to save a country and to enable God's laws to be respected. And with the earnest desire that God may save Ireland, I thank you for having heard me."

There was some applause at the conclusion of the speech, and then some one in the crowd raised a cry, "Let out the suspects!" Forster promptly answered him: "As soon as we can fairly say that outrages have ceased in Ireland, and that men are not ruined, are not maimed, and are not murdered for doing their duty, or doing what they have a legal right to do, the suspects will be released."

Such was the speech at Tullamore, delivered from an open window by the Irish Secretary to a crowd of farmers and labourers. It made a profound impression upon all parties—an impression the depth of which was proved by the extreme virulence with which both the speaker and the speech were abused in the Nationalist press. In England the episode of the tour in the west, and the uncompromising courage and frankness of Forster's language, for a time checked the course of those who were now striving to discredit him.

The press was almost unanimous in praise of his action, and when he reappeared in the House of Commons after his visit to Clare, he was received with enthusiastic cheering from the Liberal benches; though he had, at the same time, to submit to a fresh outpouring of abuse from the Parnellites.

"It is really touching," wrote his daughter, Mrs. O'Brien, in her diary (March 8th, 1882), "to see the delight of our Irish friends over the Chief Secretary's journey and his speech. They feel that such an appeal marks a new departure in the relations of an English minister and the Irish people. There is in father's manner of thinking and speaking about Irish matters and to Irish people an utter absence of British superciliousness and patronizing goodwill, which is felt and appreciated by Irishmen. . . . We had a pleasant family dinner, and heard some interesting details about the journey in the west. The meeting which had turned out so successful an experiment had been on the verge of going quite the other way. The priest of Tullamore had repented of his promise to give his flock notice of the proposed meeting, so that when father arrived on Monday morning he found that nothing had been done in the way of advertisement. Consequently he had to advertise it himself."

Some substantial results followed the visit to Clare. Thus a large land-agent, writing to a

member of the Cabinet, shortly after Mr. Forster's return to London, said, "I have had many opportunities of learning the views on Mr. Forster's tour and address from both sides of politicians and all classes. He has done very great benefit by his visit. I find in four different counties within the past four days, rents have been remitted to me without my applying for them, in instances where, on my asking for them at the usual time—early in January—I was requested, in consequence of intimidation, not then to press for the rents. I believe that Mr. Forster's presence and addresses have much lessened the effect of the dreadful intimidation which is so prevalent in the south and west."

For the moment Forster's courage and energy had checked the movements of his enemies, and caused a revulsion of feeling in his favour among many who had been joining in the attacks which were now so persistently made upon him in certain quarters in England. The battle was still, however, a terrible one in Ireland. The special magistrates were doing their best, but the progress which they were making in their struggle with the party of disorder was barely perceptible. The suspects in prison now numbered 872, and it seemed as though that number must be indefinitely increased before any real impression could be made upon the lawless elements in Ireland. But it was not merely the present that weighed heavily upon the Chief Secretary. In the future there

loomed a difficulty of the most formidable kind —the necessity of renewing the Protection Act. The House was at this time engaged in considering the Rules of Procedure proposed by Mr. Gladstone, and the Irish members had been quick to see in these rules a weapon to be used against them when the time came. They had coalesced with the Tory opposition, and were now fighting vigorously to prevent any restriction of the rights of individual members. The opponents of Mr. Forster took advantage of this state of things, in order to insist upon the fact that the Liberal Government must either abandon the Chief Secretary or submit to certain defeat in the not distant future. On March 24th, Mr. Gladstone wrote to Forster, who was then in Dublin, reporting to him the growing opposition to the ministerial proposals for instituting the closure, and the prevalent belief among the Irish sympathizers in the House that by stopping the closure they might prevent the renewal of the Protection Act. The Prime Minister added his opinion that "with the Land Act working briskly, resistance to process disappearing, and rents increasingly and even generally though not uniformly paid, a renewal of so odious a power as that which we now hold *is* impossible, and that whatever may be needed by way of supplement to the ordinary law must be found in other forms."

To MR. GLADSTONE.

"Dublin Castle, March 25th, 1882.

"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"The reason why I did not mention your proposal to —— is this. He could not make the speech you suggest without our assent, either tacit or expressed. In fact, the speech without our assent would not carry a vote; but such assent would not only pledge us to non-renewal of the Protection Act, but would oblige us to release at once. It would be very difficult, if not impossible, to keep the suspects in prison, if we let it be supposed that we shall not ask for renewal.

"Nor do I think we can as yet pledge ourselves to non-renewal. It is true that the Land Act is working, that there is no open resistance to processes, and that rents are increasingly paid; but outrages continue, and the Protection Act is our best weapon against secret societies and also against boycotting.

"Undoubtedly the Protection Act has checked, though it has not prevented, outrages. For instance, it is only by actual arrest in Loughrea that we have checked actual murder.

"Then, again, there is the question of time. Ireland will certainly be ungovernable if we give up the Protection Act, without replacing it by other strong measures. If, therefore, we let it be known that it will be given up, and therefore deprive it of power, we must be prepared, simultane-

ously with our statement, to bring in our replacing bill.

"Are we prepared to give the Parliamentary time for this?

"It is too early to form a definite opinion, but my impression is (1) that late in the session we shall bring in a bill supplementing the ordinary law, and renewing the Protection Act for a year, if possible for a less time; but (2) that we should pledge ourselves to release all the suspects on the passing of such bill, stating at the same time that we could not face the recess without the power of rearrest if absolutely necessary. I am well aware of the great importance and urgency of the approaching division, but I trust we shall not buy votes by any concession to the Parnellites. I see signs everywhere of the approaching defeat of the conspiracy, but we are in the crisis of the conflict, and any such concession just now would be fatal."

This letter speaks for itself as to the situation and the nature of the new difficulties which Forster had to meet. The exigencies of a party had to be considered as well as the needs of a country. The opponents of coercion saw their opportunity, and eagerly made use of it. On the one hand, they sought to bring pressure to bear upon ministers by threatening them with defeat on the question of the closure if they did not distinctly repudiate any intention to renew the Protection Act; and, on

the other hand, they filled the air with declarations of the failure of Mr. Forster's policy in Ireland, and with rumours of his impending supersession, the minister generally designated as his successor being Mr. Chamberlain. To add to the difficulties of the situation in Parliament, a section of the Tories had shown a disposition to coquet with the Parnellites, and an ex-minister, Sir John Hay, had placed a motion against the continuance of coercion on the notice-paper. The Chief Secretary's difficulties in Ireland, it need hardly be said, were not lightened by these cross-currents of political strife in London.

On March 28th, whilst the question of the carrying of the closure was still in suspense, Mr. Sexton brought forward a demand for the release on parole of the three imprisoned Irish members, in order that they might vote in the coming division. Mr. Forster, in declining to comply with this request, pointed to the criminal outrages which were still being committed in Ireland, and, whilst admitting that the Land League was not ostensibly guilty of these acts, regretted that it had made no persistent effort to discourage them, and intimated that if they continued the Government would be forced to resort to more stringent measures to uphold the law and to restore confidence. The question of a renewal of the Protection Act, or of any further amendment of the law in the direction of coercion, had not, at this time,

been considered by the Cabinet, and some of his colleagues were dissatisfied by his use of language which seemed to imply that a decision of this kind had already been arrived at. Mr. Gladstone wrote (March 29th), requesting him to correct the impression which had been conveyed by his speech.

To MR. GLADSTONE.

"80, Eccleston Square, London,
"March 29th, 1882.

"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"I think the best reply to your letter is to send the best report I can find of my speech—that in the *Standard*. It must be read in relation to Brand's speech, to which I was replying.

"What I meant to convey, and what I believe I did convey, was simply this—that the Government would not be beaten in the contest for law and order, and I really think it was necessary to say that much.

"I could not but suppose this was the unanimous feeling of the Cabinet. . . .

"Yours very truly,
"W. E. FORSTER."

Ministers were not beaten when the critical division on the closure took place (March 30th). On the contrary, they had a majority of 39. The Easter holidays followed immediately upon the close of the debate, and the House separated

with an uneasy consciousness of the fact that Irish affairs were becoming increasingly complicated. Forster's assailants seized the opportunity afforded by the recess to redouble their attacks upon him, and to demand more boldly than ever his removal from office, and the immediate release of the suspects, whose imprisonment had not, it was evident, prevented the continuance of the outrages. To make matters worse, the American Government became urgent in their demands for the release of those prisoners who could prove that they were citizens of the United States; whilst in addition to the political perplexities thus occasioned, the atrocious murder of an Irish lady, Mrs. H. J. Smythe, as she was driving home from church in Westmeath, sent a thrill of horror through the whole country.

To MR. GLADSTONE.

"Chief Secretary's Lodge, Dublin,
"April 4th, 1882.

"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"You may have seen an article in yesterday's *Pall Mall Gazette* urging my dismissal or resignation.

"I send you comments by Irish papers. Neither article nor comments matter much, except in so far that any weakening of my authority in Ireland does some harm at this special moment; but this must be met like other difficulties. I seize,

however, this opportunity of saying to you what has been on my mind for some time; that if now, or at any future time, you think that *from any cause* it would be to the advantage of the public service or for the good of Ireland that I should resign, I most unreservedly place my resignation in your hands. You might come to this opinion, and come to it on good grounds, without any disapproval of, or indeed disagreement with, my official action; and I earnestly beg of you not to allow yourself to be influenced, for a moment, by any personal consideration for me of any kind whatever.

"For instance, I must request you to pay no regard to the fact that I should probably appear discredited—to have failed, etc., etc.

"In making you this request, I know I am asking much from a chief who has so kindly and generously stood by a colleague as you have by me, but the *Pall Mall Gazette* is right in one thing—this is no time for personal considerations.

"Believe me to remain,
"Yours very truly,
"W. E. FORSTER."

From MR. GLADSTONE.

"Hawarden Castle, April 5th, 1882.

"Yesterday morning I was unwell, and did not see the papers, so that I have only just become

aware of the obliging suggestion that you should retire. I suspect it is partly due to a few (not, I think, many) Tory eulogies. There is one consideration which grievously tempts me towards the acceptance of the offer conveyed in your most handsome letter. It is that if you go, and go on Irish grounds, surely I must go too. At the winter end of 1880 we might have parted for cause; I do not see how we can now.

"Using the same frankness as you do, I can convey to you the assurance that so far as my knowledge goes, the notion of your retirement as a thing desirable has never crossed the mind of one of your colleagues, or of any noteworthy person, unless it be ——.

"We must continue to face our difficulties with an unbroken front, and with a stout heart. I do not admit your failure, and I think you have admitted it rather too much—at any rate, by omission; by not putting forward enough the fact that in the main point, namely, the deadly fight with the social revolution, you have not failed, but are succeeding. Your failure, were it true, is our failure; and outrage, though a grave fact, is not the main one. Were there a change in the features of the case I would not hesitate to recognize it, with whatever pain, as unreservedly as I now record their actual condition.

"I do not suppose we ought to think of legislation on the Irish case until after Whitsuntide."

On the very day on which this frank and generous letter was written by Mr. Gladstone, Forster received another letter from a Kerry gentleman, charging upon him the responsibility for the murder of a Mr. Herbert, by whose dead body this gentleman wrote. Forster wrote a kind letter to his ignorant accuser, whose anger against him provoked no corresponding feeling in his own breast. But these outrages affected his spirits more seriously than anything else. The picture of the dying Michael Moroney as he had seen him in the hospital at Tulla was ever before his eyes, and his inability to save other victims from the atrocious cruelties of the organized assassins struck something like a feeling of despair into his heart. He aged visibly under these trials, which were infinitely greater to him than the abuse heaped upon him by the Parnellites, or the intrigues which were being directed against him in London.

Writing in her diary on April 5th, Mrs. O'Brien mentions how depressed and weary her father had been, and says that Mr. West had told her that night, on returning to the Lodge with him, "that when they got out of the carriage this evening to walk, as father insisted on doing, from the park gates, he seemed much annoyed at finding that two mounted police had been following the carriage. 'What are those confounded fellows here for? I shall have this stopped.' Mr. West hopes

the police escort will not be discontinued. Dublin, he says, is full of Fenians, and only this evening, as they were driving out of Dublin, he caught sight of two men in a side street leaning forward and peering into the carriage, as if to make sure who was inside." As a matter of fact, at this time, as was subsequently proved, the secret band of assassins who had dubbed themselves "the Invincibles" were shadowing Mr. Forster by day and night for the purpose of murdering him.

To MR. GLADSTONE.

"Chief Secretary's Lodge, April 7th, 1882.

"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"To the best of my belief, I find the situation in Ireland to be this:—

"1. The November rent—that is, the rent now due—has, generally speaking, been paid, with or without abatement; very often with abatement, and very often upon compulsion or threat of compulsion.

"2. To this payment, however, there are important exceptions—isolated cases of fierce contests, not yet fought out, between landlord and tenants, backed by the Land League; exceptions more frequent and much more important, mainly in Connaught, but in poor districts elsewhere, when the arrears are hopeless.

"3. There is no open resistance to the law.

"4. The Land League has been defeated in its

attempt: first, to dictate what rents shall be paid; second, to prevent any rent being paid.

"5. There is now much less boycotting, mainly owing to the arrest of the respectable boycotters last autumn as suspects.

"6. Agrarian outrages continue bad. Exclusive of threatening letters, in

Fourth quarter of	1880	they are		717
First	„	1881	„	369
Second	„	1881	„	622
Third	„	1881	„	525
Fourth	„	1881	„	732
First	„	1882	„	555

But if we take the three worst agrarian outrages, viz. murder, manslaughter, and firing at the person, the statistics are—

			Murder.	Man-slaughter.	Firing at the person.	Total.
Fourth quarter,	1880	...	2	0	13	15
First „	1881	...	1	2	4	7
Second „	1881	...	7	2	16	25
Third „	1881	...	1	1	12	14
Fourth „	1881	...	8	0	34	42
First „	1882	...	6	0	27	33

I attribute this increase of the most serious agrarian crimes to two causes: (*a*) the fierce passions evoked by the "No Rent" struggle, for which the Land League leaders are mainly responsible; (*b*) the immunity from punishment.

"The first cause will diminish in power, unless, indeed, we have to struggle for the May rent as well as for the November rent, as some persons

fear; but the other cause *gains* strength by *continuance*. One of the worst features of recent murders is the slightness of the apparent motive. The intending murderer has little or no fear of punishment. Why? Because witnesses will not give evidence and juries will not convict; and Lord Lansdown is right in saying that a good reason why witnesses hold back is that they will not risk their lives for nothing. "What," they say, "is the use of my giving evidence which no jury will heed?"

"Now, this being, in my opinion, the situation, what measures would I propose?

"(1) A vigorous and determined effort to secure convictions of men notoriously guilty. For this purpose I do not think amendment of the jury laws will suffice. We cannot return to the old system of packing juries and tinkering; such a bitter system of challenging, etc., may be an improvement, but no cure for the present evil.

"I think we cannot stop short of taking temporary powers to try agrarian offences, without jury, by special legal commissioners. It is a question whether this should be done in districts notorious for jury failure, as Limerick, Longford, Kerry, or in cases in which the judge reports after trial that the verdict is against evidence.

"On the whole, I am in favour of the first alternative.

"(2) My next proposal would be in the hope

of getting some local support to the Government, if not *for* law, at least *against* crime. There are two directions in which we may aim at this end:—

"Appeal to the localities for material help; appeal to men to protect themselves and their neighbours. I have tried, and am trying, very hard for this; hitherto without success, but I have not yet given up hope.

"Or we may appeal to their self-interest; that is, fine men for conniving at outrages.

"I am not so sanguine as some of the effect of this provision, but I think it will do real good in creating a public opinion against outrages.

"I would therefore (*a*) make small districts pay for special police protection; and (*b*) give compensation for injury to person, as now given for destruction of property. (*c*) I would re-enact section twenty-three of the Peace Preservation Act of 1870, enabling arrest of persons out all night under suspicious circumstances. Such re-enactment will make it easier to deal with the Protection Act.

"Can we let this Act expire? I dare not face the autumn and coming winter without it. As yet it is our only weapon against demagogues who try to enforce their unwritten law; the boycotters; the murderous members of the secret societies—this may seem a contradiction to the early part of this letter. The Protection Act

does not deter murderers for fear of punishment, but it enables us to lock them up.

"Suspension of trial by jury may, probably will, enable us to deal both with boycotters and murderers, but we must be sure of this before we give up the Act.

"As regards the Land Leaguers, your proposal would enable us to deal with them, and, indeed, an enlargement of the last suggestion in your letter of yesterday would cover my jury proposal. I would renew the Act for a year, and promise to let out the suspects immediately on the passing of our new bill. Let us try if we can do without the Act, but let us keep it in reserve.

"Now as to time. I am well aware of the immense Parliamentary inconvenience of immediate legislation. It is impossible to estimate it; but, unless outrages diminish, we shall be driven to it. Ireland will be forced on our attention by questions, motions, etc.; we shall be forced to show our cards, and, indeed, the Protection Act will become useless unless we say what we are going to do, and if we sketch out or hint at our legislation, men will be very impatient to deal with it."

From this important letter Forster's view as to the legislative wants of Ireland at that time will be gathered. He virtually believed that not only must the Protection Act be maintained even

though it were to be held in reserve, but that additional powers must be given to the Irish Government, in order to enable it to bring undoubted criminals to justice. Of these powers the most important was the suspension of trial by jury. He was anxious, however, that any change in the jury law should be applicable to the whole of the United Kingdom, and the suggestion which found favour both with himself and Mr. Gladstone, was that, in districts which might be proclaimed in the interests of the public peace, cases might be tried either by magistrates or judges according to the gravity of the offence charged. Forster proceeded to draft a bill for extending the powers of the Executive, and, at the same time, in accordance with a suggestion from Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Childers, he instructed the draftsman to prepare a measure providing for the establishment of provincial councils in Ireland.

The members of the Cabinet were clearly undecided as to the form which the legislation of the year should take. Whilst outrages of the most serious kind were continuing, they could not openly announce their intention to abandon coercion, even if such an intention had been formed; but there was a strong desire on the part of some to have in readiness a large measure of concession to the Irish demand for local self-rule, and it was in response to this desire that steps were taken to frame a Provincial Councils Bill.

At this juncture, however, an event happened which, though comparatively trifling in itself, was destined to lead to important results. This was the release of Mr. Parnell on parole.

To MR. GLADSTONE.

"Chief Secretary's Lodge, Dublin,
"April 10th, 1882.

"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"Thank you for your letter. I have asked the six special magistrates to come to me to-morrow. After seeing them I will write further about repressive legislation.

"Meantime I am getting my draftsman to make rough drafts of bills.

"I send herewith draft of bill to carry out your and Childers's suggestion of Provincial Councils. It is, of course, merely rough material on which to work. I am sorry to say that I am still of the opinion that it would add fuel to the fire if it were brought forward this year.

"This morning we released Parnell—not for good, but on parole, to attend the funeral of his sister's only child at Paris. I received a telegram from him yesterday afternoon expressing his wish to attend the funeral, and undertaking to take no part in any political matter during his absence. I do not see how we could refuse. The young man was just of age, and, I imagine, his only nephew. . . .

"There is a great pressure for emigration in the west. Tuke, who has gone to Galway to administer the funds raised at the Duke of Bedford's meeting, writes me this morning that he is almost overwhelmed with applications; and I have had a visit from the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Toronto, which gives one hope of working the clauses in the act. Emigration is the only hope for the western men."

CHAPTER X.

THE KILMAINHAM TREATY—RESIGNATION.

"My six special magistrates," writes Forster to Mr. Gladstone (April 12th), "all bring me very bad reports. These are confirmed by constabulary reports. The impunity from punishment is spreading like a plague. I fear it will be impossible to prevent very strong and immediate legislation."

The question of reinforcing the Irish Executive by appointing a Cabinet minister, who had previous experience of Irish affairs, as Viceroy was raised by Lord Cowper's expression of a wish to retire from his post, and it was decided in favour of Mr. Forster's suggestion that Lord Spencer should take the place. At the time when the announcement of the change was made, there was much exultation among Forster's opponents over an event which they regarded as his "supersession." They were ignorant of many things regarding the story of his Irish administration—just as they were strikingly ignorant regarding the personal character of the man whom they so strangely misunderstood. They were not aware that Forster's earnest desire was to have Lord Spencer as his

colleague, in the event of Lord Cowper's retirement.

The reader will understand that towards Lord Cowper, Mr. Forster's feeling was one of warm friendship. Indeed, Forster's biographer would fail in his duty if he did not acknowledge the unceasing harmony of the relations which prevailed between the two men, and the steadfast loyalty and self-sacrifice with which Lord Cowper, who had to fill a most delicate and difficult position, invariably acted towards his distinguished colleague, who, though nominally his subordinate, was really the responsible ruler of Ireland. Still, when the opportunity of making a change occurred, no one felt more strongly than Forster himself the necessity of having some one in Ireland with sufficient authority as a member of the Cabinet, to act on his own independent judgment at times when the Chief Secretary was compelled to be in London in the performance of his Parliamentary duties.

But before this change could be carried out, a new train of events, which had far-reaching consequences, had been put in motion. On April 15th, Mr. Gladstone wrote to Mr. Forster enclosing a letter from Captain O'Shea, an Irish Liberal member of the House of Commons. This letter dealt with the question of evictions for arrears, and was written in a friendly spirit very uncommon at that time in communications made by Parnellite members to the Government. The

fact which gave importance to the overtures made by Captain O'Shea was that he was known to have intimate personal relations with Mr. Parnell, who was now at liberty on parole.

To MR. GLADSTONE.

"[*Secret.*]

"April 18th, 1882.

"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"I return O'Shea's letter. . . . I do not believe he has the influence either with Parnell or the priests which he claims.

"I return to-morrow night, and shall therefore be at the Cabinet on Thursday.

"I sent last night to the printer a full mem. on the condition of the country and on repressive measures, which I trust will be circulated before Saturday.

"Meantime, may I send you my views about the pressing questions: (1) The arrears. (2) The treatment of Parnell and the other leading suspects.

"The *Arrears*.—The dangers and difficulties of dealing with the question are great. . . . Nevertheless, I think, with all these dangers and difficulties, we must interfere. The evictions in Mayo and elsewhere are becoming very serious; and many of the poor cottier tenants and many of those who are most rack-rented, feel it useless to resort to the Land Court. The helpless miserable position of these poor men is the foundation of the agitation.

I think it useless to re-enact the old clauses. If the time had been extended it would have in many cases been used, but there is one fact which makes it unworkable on an efficient scale—the reluctance of the landlord to make himself liable for a sum which *he* has to receive from the tenant.

"Will you kindly consider the following plan, which is really in its main features the only one which seems to me, after much thought, to be workable?

"(1) Define Arrears, for the purpose of the clauses, to be rent owing for the year before the year's rent now due.

"It is a question whether we should interpret the year's rent now due to be year ending last autumn or this spring. Suppose we say last autumn, then our definition of arrears would be so much of the rent accruing from November, 1879, to November, 1880, as is unpaid.

"(2) Upon joint request of landlord and tenant, give from Exchequer, either with or without the Church Surplus Security, such arrears to the landlord on behalf of the tenant.

"(3) On condition that the tenant binds himself to repay the sum with interest in a certain fixed time.

"(4) Make the loan on liberal terms, as regards interest and time of repayment, and make it receivable as part of county cess.

"(5) Give this money to the landlord only on

condition of his quittance of all arrears accruing before November, 1880.

"(6) Limit the cases to tenancies at or under —— valuation.

"There would be some risk to the Exchequer in this arrangement, but, I believe, no great risk. There would be no compulsion on either landlord or tenant; but there would be great temptation. The landlord would get money he sorely needs, and the tenant would be able to start fair. I believe, generally speaking, he would arrange with the landlord for the last year's rent, and I think evictions of the cottier tenants would stop.

"Treatment of Parnell and other *leading* suspects.—I expect no slight pressure for their immediate unconditional release, and if Parnell returns after behaving well, his so acting will be the opportunity for pressure, in which men of different sides may join.

"My own view on this question is clear. I adhere to our statement that we detain these suspects, and all suspects, solely for prevention, not punishment. We will release them as soon as we think it safe to do so.

"There are three events which, in my opinion would imply safety:—(1) the country so quiet that Parnell and Co. can do little harm; (2) the acquisition of fresh powers by a fresh Act which might warrant the attempt to govern Ireland with the suspects released; (3) an assurance upon which

we could depend, that Parnell and his friends, if released, would not attempt in any manner to intimidate men into obedience to their unwritten law.

"Without the fulfilment of one or other of these conditions, I believe their release would make matters much worse than they are. At any rate I am sure I could not, without this fulfilment, administer affairs as Irish Secretary with advantage; but I do not say that it would be impossible for some other man to make this new departure. I thought I had better send you these views before we meet. They are probably badly expressed, as I have had to write against time, but they are the result of long and anxious thought.

"Yours very truly,

"W. E. FORSTER."

On the following day, April 19th, Mr. Forster's confidential memorandum on the state of Ireland was issued to the Cabinet. It embodied and amplified the facts contained in his letter to Mr. Gladstone. It was not until the 22nd that the Cabinet took up the Irish question, Mr. Forster having by this time returned to London. The most tragical crisis through which English rule in Ireland had ever passed was now close at hand: but no one save the conspirators who were plotting murder in Dublin knew how nearly the tragedy was anticipated on the day on which Forster—as it turned out for the last time—left Dublin Castle

in order that he might confer with his colleagues in London. The full truth was not made known until months afterwards, when the country listened horror-struck to the revelations of Carey the informer. Mr. Forster had arranged to leave Dublin by the mail train from Westland Row for Kingstown on the night of April 19th, and his intention to do so had been publicly announced. "While he was eating a sandwich for luncheon," says Mr. Jephson, "I asked him if he would not come down to Kingstown by an earlier train, and dine at the Royal St. George Yacht Club, of which he was an honorary member, as it would be much pleasanter there than in Dublin. The club being scarcely a couple of hundred yards from the pier whence the mail steamer started, we could dine quietly there and walk to the steamer, thus avoiding the racket and worry of cabs, stations, and trains in Dublin. He hesitated, but said, 'We'll see how work goes, and whether we can get away in time.' At about four o'clock I went to him with the last batch of papers to be dealt with. When he had finished his instructions on them, I said, 'Now, sir, that's the last, and we can go to Kingstown if you like.' 'Capital,' he replied, 'let us go;' and accordingly we left Westland Row Station by the quarter to six o'clock train for Kingstown, dined at the club there, and walked on board the steamer, where we met Mrs. Forster and her daughter, who had come by the

quarter to seven mail train, little knowing at the time how dreadful a tragedy had been avoided. At a quarter to seven o'clock, on the platform at Westland Row, there was waiting the gang of desperate men known later as the Invincibles, determined at all hazards to assassinate him; and if he had left Dublin by that train instead of the earlier one, no earthly power could have saved him." In the evidence given at the trial of the murderers of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke, it was stated that the wretches carefully examined every carriage more than once in their search for the man they had marked out as their victim, but who was destined to be so marvellously preserved from their hands.

Knowing nothing of this wonderful escape, but inspired by the conviction that the state of Ireland was exceptionally dangerous, owing to the encouragement which outrage-mongers and assassins had derived from the impunity they enjoyed, Forster came over to London, to find the Cabinet willing to allow Mr. Chamberlain to negotiate with Captain O'Shea, not merely with regard to the arrears question, but on the subject of Mr. Parnell's possible release. Ministers, however, were agreed that neither he nor the other leaders could be released unless they gave a public assurance of their resolve, so far as lay in their power, to put an end to intimidation, including boycotting.

The popular excitement on the subject of the

Irish policy of the Government had now become very great. Rumours of a "new departure" in the treatment of the country were widespread; and they received countenance, not only from the report that Lord Spencer was about to become Viceroy, but from the apparent change of tactics in the House of Commons. A bill on the subject of arrears was brought in by Mr. Healy and Mr. Redmond, and on April 26th it was discussed in a very favourable manner by Mr. Gladstone, who saw in the fact that Irish members were seeking by constitutional methods to amend the Land Act, evidence that they were beginning to abandon their attitude of uncompromising hostility to it. The fact that the bill was really inspired by Mr. Parnell, which was well known, evidently strengthened this feeling in Mr. Gladstone's mind. The Irishmen in the House showed a desire to keep their demands upon the arrears question within the bounds of moderation, and it seemed as though new relations were about to be established between the Ministry and the representatives of Ireland.

The formal announcement, on April 28th, of Lord Spencer's appointment as Viceroy was regarded as confirming these rumours; and those journals which had been attacking Mr. Forster's administration now united in speaking of him as discredited and defeated, and confidently anticipated the immediate release of the suspects. At this time, it must be borne in mind, the Tory

party showed strong signs of a desire to conciliate the Irish representatives. The *Quarterly Review* had been sneering at "the arrest of suspects by the cart-load;" Sir John Hay had given notice of a motion condemning the Protection Act and the suspension of trial by jury, and Mr. J. K. Cross, on the part of the English Radicals, if not with the direct approval of some of Forster's own colleagues, had notified his intention to move, as an amendment to Sir John Hay's motion, a resolution in favour of the immediate release of Mr. Parnell and his fellow-members. The situation, it must be admitted, was extremely complicated and difficult. Ministers, who had been abused with such vehemence a few weeks before, because they were supposed to be dealing with the Nationalist party in Ireland with criminal leniency, now found that the Tory party was prepared to attack them on the opposite ground; they saw that a powerful section of their own party was bent upon procuring an entire change of policy towards Ireland, involving the abandonment of the Protection Act and the "clearing-out of Dublin Castle"—that is to say, of the permanent members of the Irish Executive; and they believed that they had reason to look for a change of attitude on the part of the Irish leaders, from one of irreconcilable antagonism to the English Government to one of conciliatory co-operation. It is not surprising that the Cabinet was divided, and

that it wavered in its opinion. Mr. Forster, however, stood firm. The ground he took was that, so long as criminal outrages were committed with the tacit approval of the Irish leaders, it would be fatal to make any surrender to them. If Captain O'Shea could obtain a distinct promise from Mr. Parnell, who had now returned to Kilmainham, that he would do what he could to prevent outrage and intimidation in future, then he was prepared cheerfully to acquiesce in his release. But if no such promise was forthcoming, then the suspects could only be released on one condition—the passing of an Act strengthening the hands of the Irish Executive in the manner he had proposed in his letter of April 7th. In a private memorandum on the subject of the answer which he wished to give to Sir John Hay and Mr. J. K. Cross, when they moved their resolution and amendment, he wrote, "What I think I ought to be empowered to say is, that the state of the country is such that we must pass a fresh Act to preserve peace and prevent outrage. We will bring in this bill at once. Upon its becoming an Act we will release all the suspects. We hope we shall not have to rearrest them, but we have power to do so until the Protection Act expires."

These few lines express Forster's opinion with regard to the course which ministers ought to pursue in the circumstances in which they were placed. In the mean time, however, feeling was

running strongly in many quarters in favour of the release of Mr. Parnell and the principal suspects, provided any kind of pretext for taking this step could be discovered. Mr. Chamberlain's negotiations with Captain O'Shea were being continued, and Forster saw clearly that—unless the current changed—he must in the end be beaten. He had, at the request of one of his colleagues, given Captain O'Shea permission to see Mr. Parnell in prison, and the result of the interview was eagerly awaited by ministers. Meanwhile he wrote to Mr. Gladstone as follows:—

To Mr. Gladstone.

"Irish Office, April 29th, 1882.

"My dear Mr. Gladstone,

"I fear I must trouble you with my views with regard to the release of Parnell and the other M.P.s, and, indeed, I think I ought to do so before our Cabinet on Monday, especially as it will be followed so soon by the debate on Tuesday. It is possible that O'Shea may bring back from Dublin a declaration by Parnell, which may be published, that he will not in future aid or abet intimidation, and so expressed as to appear to include boycotting. I do not myself expect this, and if we do not get such public declaration I am very sorry to be obliged to say that I cannot make myself a party to his release, or to that of other suspects, M.P.s. or not, arrested on like grounds.

"I think, unless we get such declaration, or get the country much more quiet, and therefore much more relieved from intimidation than it is at present, or get an Act with fresh powers, we cannot release these men without weakening Government in Ireland to an extent which I do not believe to be safe or right.

"I will not trouble you now with my reasons for this conviction, which I have often expressed to you privately in the Cabinet, especially in last Saturday's Cabinet; and I may be wrong in this conviction, but I hold it so strongly that I shall be compelled to act upon it. I need not say I have come to this conclusion after anxious thought, and much weighing of adverse considerations, of which perhaps the strongest in my mind is reluctance in any way to add to your troubles or embarrassments, but this is one of those matters in which a man must do what he thinks is his duty.

"Yours very truly,

"W. E. FORSTER."

This letter had been written in answer to a note from Mr. Gladstone offering Forster two successive days—Monday or Tuesday, May 1st or 2nd, for a meeting of the Cabinet "to discuss the prospective policy in lieu of coercion." On receiving Forster's intimation of his resolve, Mr. Gladstone wrote, saying, "I take due note of the grave contents of the letter you have just sent me.

Were I to make a decision now, it would not be yours, but why decide now at all?"

On the following day, Sunday, April 30th, Captain O'Shea arrived from Dublin, and at once called upon Mr. Forster, at his residence in Eccleston Square. There is no need now to go into the details of the communications which passed between the Chief Secretary and the "ambassador from Mr. Parnell;" but two documents must be given in order to complete the narrative of this singular episode. The first is the account which Forster dictated to his wife immediately after the interview had taken place.

"After telling me that he had been from eleven to five with Parnell yesterday, O'Shea gave me his letter to him, saying that he hoped it would be a satisfactory expression of union with the Liberal party. After carefully reading it, I said to him, 'Is that all, do you think, that Parnell would be inclined to say?' He said, 'What more do you want? Doubtless I could supplement it.' I said, 'It comes to this, that upon our doing certain things he will help us to prevent outrages,' —or words to that effect. He again said, 'How can I supplement it?' referring, I imagine, to different measures. I did not feel justified in giving him my own opinion, which might be interpreted to be that of the Cabinet, so I said I had better show the letter to Mr. Gladstone, and to one or two others. He said, 'Well, there may

be fault in expression, but the thing is done. If these words will not do I must get others; but what is obtained is'—and here he used most remarkable words—'that the conspiracy which has been used to get up boycotting and outrages, will now be used to put them down, and that there will be a union with the Liberal party;' and as an illustration of how the first of these results was to be obtained, he said that Parnell hoped to make use of Sheridan, and get him back from abroad, as he would be able to help him to put down the conspiracy (or 'agitation,' I am not sure which word was used), as he knew all its details in the west. (This last statement is quite true. Sheridan is a released suspect, against whom we have for some time had a fresh warrant, and who under disguises has hitherto eluded the police, coming backwards and forwards from Egan to the outrage-mongers in the west.)

"I did not feel myself sufficiently master of the situation to let him know what I thought of this confidence; but I again told him that I could not do more at present than tell others what he had told me. I may say that, in the early part of the conversation, he stated that he (O'Shea) hoped and advised—and in this case he was doubtless speaking for Parnell—that we should not to-morrow —I suppose meaning Tuesday—'pledge ourselves to any time for bringing on fresh repressive measures.' He also said that he had persuaded

Parnell to help to support a large emigration from the west, and that Parnell had told him that he had had a good deal of conversation with Dillon, and had brought him round to be in full agreement with himself upon the general questions."

Mr. Parnell's letter to Captain O'Shea, of which that gentleman gave Mr. Forster a copy, was chiefly taken up with a statement of his views upon the arrears question. The passages relating to the all-vital "pledge" upon the necessity of which Forster had insisted were as follows:—"If the arrears question be settled upon the lines indicated by us, I have every confidence —a confidence shared by my colleagues—that the exertions which we should be able to make strenuously and unremittingly would be effective in stopping outrages and intimidation of all kinds. . . . The accomplishment of the programme I have sketched out to you would, in my judgment, be regarded by the country as a practical settlement of the land question, and would, I feel, soon enable us to co-operate cordially for the future with the Liberal party in forwarding Liberal principles and measures of general reform, and that the Government at the end of this session would, from the state of the country, feel themselves thoroughly justified in dispensing with further coercive measures."

Such were the chief points of the document which was afterwards described as the Treaty of

Kilmainham. Forster had not disguised his reluctance to countenance the negotiations between Captain O'Shea and a member of the Cabinet. His strong conviction was that the secret bands of outrage-mongers, by whom Ireland was held under the spell of a cruel and demoralizing terror, could not be dealt with by means of any negotiations whatever with the Land League leaders. But if such negotiations were to be carried on with the sanction of the Government, and if Mr. Parnell and his colleagues were to be released, he was at least anxious that the pledge which they gave should be so clear and emphatic as to convince the most ignorant of the Irish cottiers that they were resolutely opposed, not merely to assassination and the more flagrant kinds of violence, but to boycotting and to every species of moral as well as material intimidation. The promises from Mr. Parnell which were conveyed to him by Captain O'Shea failed entirely to meet his conditions; whilst the mention of Sheridan as one of the instruments through whom Mr. Parnell proposed to exercise his influence in preventing outrages, implied, in his opinion, some kind of previous connection between the Irish leader and that notorious person. He immediately forwarded Mr. Parnell's letter and his own account of the interview with Captain O'Shea to Mr. Gladstone, telling him that he had expected little from the negotiations, and found that the result was less

even than he had expected. Mr. Gladstone took a different view. Writing to Forster the same day, he expressed the gratification with which he had read the sentence in Mr. Parnell's letter beginning, "If the arrears question be settled." With regard to the expression in the letter of willingness on the part of the writer to co-operate in future with the Liberal party, Mr. Gladstone wrote: "This is a *hors d'œuvre* which we had no right to expect, and I rather think have no right at present to accept. I may be far wide of the mark, but I can scarcely wonder at O'Shea's saying 'the thing is done.' . . . On the whole, Parnell's letter is, I think, the most extraordinary I ever read. I cannot help feeling indebted to O'Shea."

Mr. Gladstone's satisfaction with the letter of Mr. Parnell virtually settled, not only the question of the release of the suspects, but that of Forster's continuance in office. On the following day, Monday, May 1st, the Cabinet met, and it was found that the difference between the Chief Secretary and certain of his colleagues was irreconcilable. He was still willing to allow the release of Mr. Parnell on condition that the new Crimes Bill, which had already been drafted, should be at once introduced; but in the end the Cabinet refused to give way to him on this point. The meeting broke up still leaving the matter in suspense, some of his colleagues yet

hoping that a *modus vivendi* might be discovered. To one of these he wrote as follows:—

"Irish Office, Great Queen Street, S.W.,
"May 2nd, 1882.

"MY DEAR ——,

"I have been very anxiously thinking over the suggestion in your kind note, with which I find both —— and —— concur. You three are especially good judges of the situation, and I wish I could agree with you—but I cannot.

"I understand the proposal to be—the release of Parnell and the two other M.P.s, and, at the same time, the announcement that fresh repressive measures will be brought in without delay.

"Now, this does not meet my objection. Either the release is unconditional, or it is not. If unconditional, I think it is, at the present moment, a surrender to the law-breakers. If conditional, I think it is a disgraceful compromise.

"The statement that we will bring in a fresh repressive bill, will not, in my opinion, enable me to say that release, under either of these interpretations, will be either right or safe.

"The release will be hailed in Ireland as the acknowledgment of Parnell's supremacy. The 'No Rent' manifesto will be withdrawn, because it has served his object.

"There will be an agitation against the New

Coercion Bill, emboldened and strengthened by the defeat of the old bill.

"Moreover, I doubt whether Mr. Gladstone will consent to the immediate introduction of the new bill. I think he will require both Budget and procedure to be first dealt with. And, in fact, I think the course you propose, while it does not meet my difficulties, will increase the difficulties resulting from immediate release.

"However much we may try to hide the fact, release is a new departure, and, if so, let it be made with the probability of success. It is, in fact, a concession to Parnell.

"Do not, therefore, accompany it with an attack upon the party he leads and represents. If there be faith in him, let it be shown, and give him credit for so assisting us to govern the country as to make the repressive measures we contemplate no longer necessary.

"Yours sincerely,

"W. E. FORSTER."

It was after writing this letter that Forster made his final determination known to Mr. Gladstone, who immediately acknowledged it.

MR. GLADSTONE *to* MR. FORSTER.

"May 2nd, 1882.

"I have received your letter with much grief, but on this it would be selfish to expatiate. I have

no choice; followed or not followed, I must go on. There are portions of the subject which touch you personally, and which seem to me to deserve *much* attention. But I have such an interest in the main issue, that I could not be deemed impartial, so that I had better not enter on them.

"One thing, however, I wish to say. You wish to minimize in any public statement the cause of your retreat. In my opinion—and I *speak from experience*—viewing the nature of the cause, you will find this hardly possible. For a justification I fear you will have to found upon the doctrine of 'a new departure,' or must protest against it, and deny it with heart and soul."

Thus came to an end Forster's term of office as Irish Secretary, and his connection with the second administration of Mr. Gladstone. From most of his colleagues he parted with open grief, suffered equally on their side and on his. From Mr. Gladstone especially he parted with profound sorrow. There had from time to time been differences between them during their official connection, but up to the last moment they had been differences on questions of detail, not of principle; whilst during those terrible months in which Forster had been waging war against the outrage-mongers in Ireland, under a flank fire from English Conservatives and English Radicals, he had received a constant and a loyal and generous support from his chief. It

was only when they reached "the parting of the ways," and when Mr. Gladstone had convinced himself of the necessity for a new departure in the policy of the Government towards Ireland, that the two men fell asunder. Speaking of that parting, Forster told the present writer that he had learned not merely to esteem Mr. Gladstone, but to love him during their intercourse as colleagues, and he bore testimony to the fact that he had never ceased to be supported by him until the moment came when the Prime Minister found reason to change his policy. Then, however, the change of policy was swiftly followed by a change of attitude, so far as politics were concerned, deplored by both men, but under the circumstances inevitable.

At the morning sitting of the House of Commons (May 2nd) Mr. Gladstone briefly announced the new departure upon which ministers had resolved, viz. the release of the imprisoned members and of all suspects not associated with the commission of crime; and stated that this act had entailed upon the Government "a lamentable consequence"—the loss of the services of the Chief Secretary. The news, even though it had been known for some time that the Cabinet was divided in opinion on the Irish question, caused a great sensation throughout the country. For two years Mr. Forster had been in the forefront of the battle on behalf of English law and English

rule in Ireland. Many men had differed from him; not a few had criticized him harshly, some had abused him without stint. On the other hand, thousands of his fellow-countrymen, as they watched him pursuing his difficult and dangerous way regardless of abuse and slander, showing all the dogged tenacity of purpose, the patient endurance, and the high personal courage which are characteristic of our English nature, had learned to look upon him as the representative of that which was best and highest in the nation. These mourned over his resignation as openly and sincerely as the Irish members and their allies rejoiced; whilst all waited with eager impatience for an explanation of the event. Probably there were few who knew what his term of office as Irish Secretary had been to Mr. Forster. None save those who stood nearest to him knew at what an expenditure of brain and nerve, of heart and spirit he had carried on his terrible work. He had gone to Ireland full of hope—full, too, of confidence in his own determination to do his best to win the Irish people to him and to the nation which he represented. Then had come the terrible check to his policy of wise reform and conciliation which was caused by the rejection of the Compensation for Disturbance Bill in the House of Lords, and straightway had followed that season of criminal agitation, of cruel outrage, and still more cruel intimidation, in which it had become abso-

lutely necessary, if law and social order were not to be entirely submerged, to abandon the ordinary constitutional safeguards, and to govern Ireland by exceptional laws. From the moment when, sorely against his will, but in the performance of an imperative duty, he had found himself committed to that hateful task, he had realized the fact that so far as his personal share in them was concerned, all his life-long aspirations regarding Ireland had been frustrated. The man who had to administer the Protection Act, the man who was caricatured in every Nationalist newspaper as a monster of tyranny and brutality, the man whose name the very children of Ireland had learned to lisp with loathing, could never hope to accomplish his heart's desire by removing from the breasts of the Irish people the last memory of injustice suffered under English rule.

If he had thought only of himself, Forster would have resigned before ever events had made a Protection Act necessary. It was only because he was loyal to his colleagues and to the duty which they had imposed upon him that he remained at his post during eighteen months of such labour, anxiety, and grief as few ministers of the Crown have ever had to encounter. During that period he strove with all his might to put an end to the reign of terror which prevailed throughout so large a portion of the country. That was his first work, and to it he devoted

the greater part of his time and thoughts. But he seized every opportunity of helping on, so far as he could, those remedial measures in the efficacy of which he believed so strongly. The Land Act owed much to him, not only in its inception, but in the manner in which it was afterwards brought into operation. At the time when the struggle with the Land Leaguers was fiercest, he found time to devote several days continuously to the careful study of the qualifications of the many candidates for the post of sub-commissioner, and it was owing to the care which he thus exercised that he prevented the Land Committee from being wrecked at the very outset of its career. All through his secretaryship he maintained his correspondence with his old friend, Mr. James Tuke, and he was never so happy as when he was able to assist that gentleman in his efforts to relieve the misery of the congested districts of Ireland. The picture of his term of office at Dublin is necessarily one of which the chief feature is his hand-to-hand fight with the Land League and the outrage-mongers. But all through that time, despite the trials and vexations of spirit and temper to which he was constantly exposed, Forster was true to his early career and his life-long sympathies. Nothing diverted him from the task of doing what he could to mitigate the material lot of the Irish poor, without regard to the political opinions which they professed.

Of the manner in which he worked during those two years of office as Irish Secretary, there is little need to speak. He showed even more than the energy he had displayed when he was passing his Education Bill. Hardly any man in public life ever had greater power of work than he had, and certainly none ever spared himself less. "Mr. Forster was a tremendous worker," writes Mr. Jephson. "How his constitution stood it was wonderful. From early morning until late at night he was always at work—not perfunctorily working, but with the whole of his powerful mind given to his task—given to it with an earnestness, a thoroughness, which was one of his most remarkable characteristics. He was always anxious to get every possible information on any subject he had to deal with, and often after a heavy day's work he would have two or three men to dinner, who were best qualified to inform him on the subject in which he was interested, for the sake of getting from them what new light he could about it. His one desire was to master his subject, whatever it might be. His judgment of men was both rapid and true. It took him but a very short time to form his idea of a man's calibre. Of intriguers or humbugs he never concealed his contempt. For the two years he was Chief Secretary, his life was one of most tremendous pressure: no rest, no relaxation, except a holiday so short as scarcely to deserve the name, when Parliament

rose, or a very occasional game of whist at his club. The whole burden of the government fell upon his shoulders. Wearing himself out with work which, from its nature, involved great anxiety, never getting rid of one task except to find another and a heavier one in its place, interminable debates in Parliament, endless subjects of heated discussion, the innumerable daily questions of Irish government—all these had to be faced. Yet he never showed the least sign of flinching from the labours, or responsibilities, or dangers of his post. Everything—ease, comfort, health—was sacrificed that he might perform his duty."

To this tribute, from one who shared as well as witnessed his labours and his dangers, it is unnecessary to add anything. The reader will, however, understand that, keenly as Forster felt the manner in which he quitted his post, and strongly as he disapproved of the action of his colleagues in the new departure upon which they had now entered, he had no reason to regret the removal from his shoulders of a burden which had long been distasteful and oppressive to him, and which latterly had become well-nigh unbearable.

The diary of his daughter for the day (May 2nd) shows something of the spirit in which he accepted his fate. "A little before eight, father himself appeared, and gave us a most cheery account of all that had taken place. He had fully expected that nothing would be said that afternoon, and was

surprised when Mr. B—— said to him: 'So I hear Gladstone is going to make his statement this afternoon.' 'Is he?' said father, with astonishment. 'Well, you ought to know,' was the not unnatural answer. Not wishing to be in the House when Mr. Gladstone spoke, and yet wishing to hear what was said, father took refuge in Lady Brand's gallery. Having heard the statement, he betook himself to the Athenæum, where he was greeted with acclamation at the whist-table in the light of an old player restored to his friends. Much cheerful talk at dinner, but a curious feeling of excitement, and as though the tears were not very far off one's eyes. 'Well,' said father, 'I think you might all drink the health of the right honourable gentleman the member for Bradford, as Gladstone called me to-night. I am very glad of one thing, and that is that I was able to get that done (extra pay) for the constabulary before I went out of office!'"

To Mr. Burke.

"[*Confidential.*]

"Irish Office, May 3rd, 1882.

"My dear Burke.

"You will understand why I could not tell you what would happen. No one can exactly tell what another man would do in his place; but I strongly suspect that had you been in my place you would have acted as I have done.

"Well, I must say this, that my difficulties have been greatly lessened by your help. I do not think I ever acted with any man on whom I felt I could rely with such perfect confidence.

"I suppose I am still Chief Secretary, until replaced; but of course I cannot take any step requiring discretion.

"Yours very truly,
"W. E. Forster."

On Thursday, May 4th, Mr. Forster, having received the usual gracious permission from the Queen, made his statement of the reasons of his resignation. Just before he did so, it was made known that his successor was to be Lord Frederick Cavendish, and not, as most persons had expected, Mr. Chamberlain. Never, probably, in the history of the English Parliament had a more dramatic scene been witnessed than that upon which the spectators in the gallery looked down as Mr. Forster rose, no longer from his accustomed place upon the Treasury bench, but from a corner seat behind it, to give his explanation of the circumstances under which he had retired from the Ministry. For months past the eyes of his fellow-countrymen had been fixed upon him. Some had approved, and some had blamed, but all had been conscious of the absorbing interest of the struggle which he had been waging, almost single-handed, against the revolutionary forces in Ireland. The

popular interest had been stimulated by the fact that all men knew that, whilst dangerous conspiracies against the life of the Chief Secretary had been woven in Dublin, intrigues hardly less deadly against his official career and his character as a statesman had been carried on in London. He had escaped with his life from the desperate men who had sought to slay him in Ireland; but he had fallen in England before those who sought not his life, but his career and his reputation. His retirement from office was universally accepted as implying the reversal of the policy which he represented, and the opening up of a new era in the history of the two countries. The mind of the nation was strongly divided as to the wisdom and safety of the new policy, and according as men thought of that policy so did they regard Mr. Forster. To those who were the advocates of the new departure, his fall from office was an occasion of triumph. To the rest of the world he stood forth as a hero and a victim, sacrificed upon the altar of political expediency. Thus the crowded House, where every seat on the floor and in the galleries had its occupant, met under the influence of the strongest emotions to hear his statement. The Prince of Wales and many of the leaders among the peers sat with the ambassadors in the diplomatic gallery, deeply interested spectators of the scene. But it was not upon the heir-apparent or the distinguished men around him that the attention of the House was first fixed. Among

the Irish members below the gangway two men were to be seen who had long been absent from their Parliamentary duties. They were two of the newly released suspects—Mr. Dillon and Mr. O'Kelly; and their presence in the midst of their friends seemed to proclaim their triumph over the minister to whose last official statement the House was about to listen. From the Irish benches, the eye of the spectator turned naturally to the Treasury bench, where, in the pale set faces of the ministers, who had just arrived after long debate at a resolution which implied the loss of a colleague and the reversal of a policy, one could easily read signs of that repressed excitement which had possession of all. There were two vacant places on the bench that evening. One was the place so lately occupied by Mr. Forster himself. The other was that which belonged to Lord Frederick Cavendish, whose refined and gentle face could be seen beneath the gallery, where—for the moment shut out from the House of Commons by his acceptance of office—he sat to listen to the speech of his predecessor. No mark of doom was on his brow; but there were many afterwards who recalled the air of almost pathetic interest—the grave and slightly abstracted expression in his eyes—which distinguished him whilst the debate proceeded. As one who was near him said later on, it seemed as though he were in a waking dream.

It was upon Forster, however, that men's eyes finally rested when the preliminaries of the sitting had been gone through, and the moment for his rising drew near. No one could see him without feeling conscious that he bore outward traces of the conflict, dark and terrible, from which he had but now emerged. His fellow-members had literally seen his hair grow grey during those two years of service in Ireland, and in the strongly marked lines of his powerful face, in his very attitude as he sat upon the bench, no longer half-lounging, as was his wont in ordinary times, but with bent form and downcast eye, marks of the conflict and crisis through which he had passed could be discerned only too plainly. When he rose in response to the Speaker's call, a great cheer rolled through the House. It was not merely the generous cheer with which most men are willing to greet one who, having done his duty to the best of his ability, has met with disaster in his course. That sentiment, indeed, pervaded most parts of the House when Forster rose. But mingled with it, in many quarters, was distinct and pronounced sympathy with the policy which he represented, and dislike—one might almost say disgust—towards the policy by which he had been supplanted. It was, perhaps, but natural that the Irish members, who regarded the occasion as one of personal triumph for themselves, should have replied to this cheer of greeting with which

Forster was received, by one of defiant exultation. A moment later the Irish cheer swelled into a fierce shout of joy, as the man who, more than any other, personated the national foe with whom Forster had been engaged in deadly struggle, the leader of the Land League, the "uncrowned king," whose will had been stronger than the law of the land in three of the provinces of Ireland, took his seat in his old place below the gangway, and turned to face the man by whose will he had for months past been a prisoner in Kilmainham.

The atmosphere was charged with the intense excitement universally felt, and which centred as it were upon Mr. Forster. Yet so well had he nerved himself for the occasion, that when he began to speak he alone in the crowded House seemed to be fully master of his emotions. His voice was low, but deep and clear; his language simple and precise.

The explanation which he had to give of the circumstances under which he had resigned was perfectly clear and straightforward. It is unnecessary to repeat it here, for the facts have already been made plain in the course of the narrative. Forster was happily able to point to the fact that the state of Ireland had improved and was improving, but it was not yet possible, without risk of the gravest danger, to relax the hold of the Executive; nor was there such an improvement as to make it, in his opinion, safe to release the

suspects unconditionally. Much party feeling was aroused in the House by the speeches which followed the explanatory statement. Suspicions had got abroad as to the existence of some kind of arrangement between Mr. Parnell and the Government—a bargain under which the Irish leader had purchased his release. Nothing on this subject was said either by Forster or Mr. Gladstone on May 4th, though the expression of a hope by the former that ministers would not submit to any black-mail arrangement was eagerly caught up by those who shared the apprehensions so largely entertained by the general public. The announcement that ministers meant to bring in a bill on the question of arrears was regarded by the House as proof that the "new departure" which had led to the resignation of the Chief Secretary was to be one in the direction of an amicable understanding with Mr. Parnell and his colleagues.

Subsequently the correspondence between Captain O'Shea and Mr. Parnell became public property. Forster was blamed at the time, by some of those critics whose loyalty to the Government which they supported apparently interfered with their sense of justice towards others, for having refused to allow a garbled version of Mr. Parnell's letter—omitting all reference to his suggestion that he would be able to support the Liberal party upon certain conditions—to be read in the House of Commons. There is no need now to defend him

against that charge, the absurdity of which was obvious at the time when it was first brought forward. He was bound, in defence of his own honour and in justification of the course which he had been compelled to take in resigning his office, not to allow a mutilated document to be placed before the House of Commons in professed explanation of his conduct. The heated controversy which was waged over the so-called Kilmainham Treaty, and the bitter partisan condemnations which were pronounced upon Forster himself, because he had dared to pursue his own course on a question on which he had learned much by a practical experience of the most terrible kind, and on which he felt so deeply that no personal consideration could affect his judgment, need not engage attention here. They belong to a dead past, and no vindication of Forster's action in connection with them is necessary.

But before the full details of the circumstances under which he had left office became known, indeed before the excitement which that event had caused in the public mind had subsided, there occurred the terrible tragedy of the Phœnix Park. The story of the crime lies outside the scope of this narrative, but it had so close a connection with Mr. Forster's career in Ireland, it was so intimately associated with his own personality, that it cannot be passed over in silence.

Forster's resignation, at the moment when Lord

Spencer was about to go to Dublin as the successor of Lord Cowper, made it necessary that not a day should be lost in the nomination of his successor, and, as I have already said, the appointment of Lord Frederick Cavendish was officially notified on May 4th. On the following evening Lord Frederick started, in company with Lord Spencer, for Dublin. The "new departure" had excited the wildest hopes among the Nationalists; the release of Mr. Parnell being regarded by them as a crowning triumph for their cause. They were prepared accordingly to receive the new representatives of the English Government, if not with enthusiasm, at all events with a not unfriendly welcome; and the streets of Dublin were thronged with a great crowd of Irishmen on the morning of the 6th of May, when the Viceroy and the Chief Secretary made their entry into the city. A few hours later the whole empire was convulsed with horror by the news that Lord Frederick Cavendish, and Mr. Burke, the Irish Under-Secretary, had been foully murdered, whilst crossing the Phœnix Park, by a band of assassins, whose plans, it was evident, had been laid long beforehand with the utmost deliberation.

It was late at night when the news of the terrible crime was received in London. The murder itself had been committed about seven o'clock in the evening, and had actually been witnessed by passers-by, who believed that the assassins and

their victims were merely indulging in rude horse-play. The first news of the tragedy did not, however, reach London until some hours later, when a telegram from Lord Spencer was placed in the hands of the Home Secretary, Sir William Harcourt, at a dinner-party given by a member of the Government. The tidings fell like the proverbial "bolt from the blue" upon those who were rejoicing in the belief that all the difficulties in the way of a reconciliation between the two nations had been removed by the resignation of Mr. Forster and the release of the suspects. It was at a reception at the Admiralty that the tidings first leaked out; and it was there that Forster heard of an event which affected him more closely than any other person not a member of the families of the murdered men. His daughter writes in her diary: "I went this evening, after our own dinner-party, with father to the Admiralty—an evening party to meet the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh. After leaving my cloak, father and I were preparing to enter the drawing-room, filled with people, and a buzz of talking and lights, but were met by Sir William Harcourt and Mr. Howard Vincent. Sir William took father aside to speak to him, as I supposed, about some question of Parliamentary tactics, and I was left to talk to Mr. Vincent. By the look of father's face as he came towards me, I could see that something was the matter; but he frightened me when he said to me, 'Put your things on; we

must go.' As soon as we were outside I entreated him to tell me what had happened, seeing that he had called a hansom, and was, I thought, going to drive off and leave me in this fearful suspense. But he said nothing, only signed to me to get into the hansom, and left word with the servants that the carriage was to go home. Then he said to me, 'They've shot Burke and dangerously wounded Lord Frederick. They've killed Burke,' he added. After some minutes, he said, 'It is awful.' 'I don't understand it,' I said. 'They find the pressure taken off,' he answered; adding, after another silence, 'I shall go to-morrow, and ask if they'll let me go back.'"

Those who remember how that dreadful night and the following day with its long hours of anxiety, horror, and excitement passed, will not wonder at the emotion which was shown by Forster when he heard that his own successor in the post he had held but a few days before, and the brave and devoted Irishman who had been his faithful friend and fellow-labourer during his two years of work in Dublin, had fallen side by side under the knives of wretches whose guilt was only made more hideous by the flagrant hypocrisy of the pretence that it was from lofty motives of patriotism that they had been led to bathe their hands in innocent blood. Forster "could not trust his voice," as he tried to express himself regarding the blow which had been struck on that

bright spring evening in Phœnix Park. Like all who knew Lord Frederick Cavendish, he was inexpressibly shocked at the thought that a life so full of promise, a life already indeed so rich in performance, should have been cut short in such a manner; and there were, of course, special personal causes which made the sentiment doubly keen in his case. But it was for Mr. Burke that he felt most. He knew even then that his own was the life which had really been aimed at, and there was in his mind that undercurrent of noble distress which affects the soldier who learns that his comrade has fallen at the post of duty and of danger, whilst he himself has been absent.

No one who saw Forster on the Sunday morning which followed the receipt of the news will forget their meeting with him. He went to the Reform Club early in the morning. One of his objects in going there was to see the present writer with regard to a proposed dinner in his honour, for which arrangements had already been made, and which he now asked might be abandoned. The great crowd of members which thronged the hall—generally empty at that hour on Sunday morning—pressed round Forster, gazing at him with wondering eyes, as though they saw in him one who had been saved by a miracle from the fate which had fallen upon others. He himself was still under the influence of the deep distress which had overwhelmed him when he first

heard the news. But he discussed the event calmly. In his own mind there was even then not the smallest doubt that the crime had been deliberately planned, and that it was nothing more than the natural development of that hellish system of personal violence and outrage against which he had been waging for months past so strenuous a warfare. It must have been a revelation to some of those who knew nothing of the real character of the man, and who had accepted that ridiculous perversion of the truth—widely current in certain circles—which represented Forster as one whose feelings were blunt and hard, to note the tenderness of the faltering accents in which he spoke of the two dead men, and, above all, of Mr. Burke. No one could be with him without feeling that this tragical *dénouement* to the exciting events of the previous week, and to that "new departure" over which the journalists were raising their pæans of joy, affected him to an extraordinary degree. But, in whatever other way he was affected by the event, it did not touch the iron nerve which had been proof against the perils and trials of the past two years; and, believing far more fully than most people did then that the crime of the Phœnix Park was no "accident," but a part of a cunningly devised scheme of political assassination, which included his own murder—or "removal," as it was euphemistically termed by the assassins—in its scope, he went

straight from the Reform Club to Mr. Gladstone, and offered to return to Dublin that evening, temporarily to fill the vacancy which had been caused by the loss of Mr. Burke, the man who, next to himself, was most intimately acquainted with the existing condition of things in Ireland.

Remembering all the circumstances, the offer was one which Forster's friends may well recall with pride. Devotion to duty, of the strongest kind, could alone have led him to make it at such a moment. The Ministry did not avail themselves of his proffered service. Forster's official connection with Ireland had closed for ever.

It is not wonderful that, in the lurid light of the great crime of May 6th, men should have viewed the policy and actions of Mr. Forster very differently from the way in which they regarded them before that event. Numberless Englishmen who had been inclined to scoff at his warnings when he was in office, and when he was explaining his differences with his colleagues, now regarded him as being the one man who had really known the truth regarding Ireland and told it plainly. There were many others who, without going so far, were now for the first time enabled to realize the gravity of the task in which he had been engaged, and to understand that, in the existing conditions, success in such a task, with the means to which he was confined, was impossible. As for the "new departure," it came to an end when the cowards' blows

were struck in the Phœnix Park on the 6th of May.

On the following Monday the House met only to adjourn immediately, after fitting tribute had been paid to the virtues of the murdered men. How different now was the scene from that which had been witnessed on the previous Thursday! Those who had then been loudest in their exultation over Forster's fall, now sat mute and sorrowful, overwhelmed by the blow which had shattered their hopes. Mr. Forster seized the opportunity of paying his own tribute of sorrow to the victims, but it was specially of Mr. Burke that he wished to speak. "There is no member, I believe," he said, "certainly no member present, who knew Mr. Burke so well as I did, and I feel it to be my duty to say a word or two about him. I had the most intimate relations with him under difficult circumstances for two years. It was a very short time before I found out what manner of man he was, and I can truly say I believe the Queen and country never had a more faithful, a more upright, and a more truly honourable and unselfish servant. His industry, his devotion to his duty, was something more than we are accustomed to. During the last two years he never had a fortnight's holiday. Day after day, from morning to night, he plodded on with work which was most distasteful, uncomplainingly, quietly, with a silent, dignified reticence that belonged to him, without much acknowledg-

ment, without much praise. He never expected it. I think I never met with a man so completely without prejudice, so completely and absolutely fair, and so determined to do justice to all classes, and that in a country where it is sometimes difficult." He concluded by speaking of Mr. Burke's special anxiety to protect the tenantry wherever they were the victims of injustice.

On the next day, Tuesday, Sir William Harcourt introduced a new Coercion Bill, which, although it was laid upon the lines indicated by Forster before he retired from office, was in many respects more severe and stringent in its character than anything which he had proposed. The assassinations had at least convinced his old colleagues that he was right in his declaration that Ireland could not at that moment be governed, nor a policy of conciliation adopted towards the popular party, unless stronger powers were placed in the hands of the authorities than those granted them by the common law.

The terrible and momentous events which followed so closely upon his resignation of office prevented any conclusive test being applied to the new policy which ministers had adopted as compared with that which he advocated. Everything was changed by the murder of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke. The policy of the Cabinet itself was so largely modified that it was virtually another policy altogether from that which

had been the occasion of his resignation. Ministers, indeed, were compelled to adopt one of the conditions which he had set forth as essential to his own continuance in office. Thus there was never any possibility of comparing the new policy with the old. This fact may not justify Forster's friends in claiming a triumph for his Irish Secretaryship. No such triumph was possible under the existing conditions; but it is at least a sufficient reason for dismissing with contempt the declarations of those partisan judges who loudly denounced his administration in Ireland as a failure, and who professed to discover the reason for that failure in the idiosyncrasy of the man himself.

It is only necessary, in order to complete the account of his Chief Secretaryship, to record briefly the facts which were brought to light in February, 1883, when James Carey, one of the leaders in the plot for the assassination of Mr. Burke, turned Queen's evidence, and revealed the whole ghastly truth with regard to the Phœnix Park murder. This Carey, it should be said, was one of the suspects imprisoned by Mr. Forster. He had passed as a respectable member of society, and, at the time of his arrest on the charge of being concerned in the murders of May 6th, he was a member of the Dublin Town Council. His story, as told in the witness-box, after he had turned informer to save his own neck, was that in November, 1881, a secret society had been established in

Dublin called the Irish Invincibles. The object of this society was "to make history" by "removing" all tyrants. The first person against whose life the conspiracy was directed was Mr. Forster. Next to him in the fatal list came Lord Cowper; whilst the name of Mr. Burke only seems to have been added as an afterthought. It was really Mr. Forster who was the object of the vengeance of these men; and marvellous indeed was the story told of his repeated escapes from their attempts upon his life. On Friday, March 3rd, the conspirators, who were kept informed by confederates in London, met at the railway station for the purpose of killing him on his return from his memorable journey to Clare. They were armed with revolvers, and meant, so Carey said, to shoot everybody in the carriage with Mr. Forster. Happily he was then in the midst of his visits to the disturbed districts, and the assassins were altogether misinformed as to his intention to return to Dublin. A few days later another plot was devised. He was to be shot whilst driving from the Chief Secretary's Lodge to Dublin. The precise spot fixed upon for the commission of the outrage was between Victoria Bridge and King's Bridge; and here Brady, Kelly, and the other men who subsequently murdered Lord Frederick Cavendish, were lying in wait for him. A line of conspirators had been formed along the route for the purpose of signalling his approach. In due

time he came along the road in his carriage. Carey, the leader of the party, was on the spot, and as soon as the carriage had passed he jumped on a tram-car, hoping to reach the scene fixed upon for the murder in time to witness it. But again the scheme failed. One of the conspirators—a man named Rowles—tardily repented of his part in the crime. He was one of the scouts whose duty it was to signal Forster's approach. He saw the Chief Secretary's carriage pass, and he made no sign. Thus and thus only, by the providence of God, was Forster's life saved on this occasion. Rowles, who is now dead, acknowledged before his death that his heart had failed him at the last moment, and that he had intentionally allowed the destined victim to escape.

Their repeated failures exasperated the conspirators, and they redoubled their efforts to attain their end. For four successive nights—Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday—in the week on which Mr. Forster finally left Ireland, the whole gang, fifteen in number, waited in Westland Row Station purposing to kill him as he was entering the train for Kingstown. On the last day of their waiting Carey told how they recognized Mrs. Forster and her daughter in one of the carriages; but Forster himself was not there, and again he had escaped them. This was the occasion, already mentioned, on which he had accepted the suggestion of Mr. Jephson, and had dined at Kingstown

instead of in Dublin. "If he had been there," said Carey, in giving his evidence, "he would not have been alive to-day." It was only when it was known that Mr. Forster was not to return to Ireland that the conspirators turned their attention to Mr. Burke. The evidence of the informers clearly showed that the intention was simply to kill the Under-Secretary. Lord Frederick Cavendish was unknown to the men who slew him. He owed his fate to the fact of his having walked across the park with Mr. Burke, and to his courage in defending that gentleman when he was attacked.

When Carey's hideous story was told, popular feeling rose nearly as high as at the time of the assassinations. The fact that some men who had been closely connected with the Land League were proved to have been at the bottom of the vile plot, and that money was freely expended in carrying it out, intensified the horror and indignation of the public. As for Mr. Forster, people now saw how puerile had been the spiteful suggestion of some of his political assailants that the plots against him, of which only rumours had hitherto been heard, were merely imaginary affairs, dexterously invented for the purpose of enlisting public sympathy on his behalf! It is not pleasant even to have to refer to such a fabrication as this. But it was current at one time among those who considered that Forster had sinned unpardonably when he refused to yield his own judgment to that

of his colleagues, and it is, therefore, necessary to speak of it. The infamous creature who had taken a leading part in planning the murder of Forster, who subsequently directed the ruffians who slew Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke, and who, after betraying all who had confided in him, himself died by the hand of an assassin, was able at least to refute this particular aspersion upon the character of the man against whose life he had plotted so desperately and persistently.

THE LIBRARY AT WHARFESIDE.

CHAPTER XI.

LAST YEARS.

Towards the close of May, Mr. Forster went to Normandy for a brief rest after the excitements and fatigues of his Irish secretaryship. He was the more willing to take this step inasmuch as his presence in the House of Commons, after the Phœnix Park murders, appeared to have a strangely exasperating effect upon the followers of Mr. Parnell, who lost no opportunity of insulting him. Forster's opinions regarding the Parnellite party had undergone no change, whilst the terrible events which followed his resignation had only strengthened his conviction that the resolution adopted by ministers on May 2nd was wholly wrong. But he had no wish whatever to increase the embarrassments of his old colleagues; and though determined to stick to his post and live down the memory of the past and the passions of the moment, he was not sorry to avail himself of a journey abroad, as a reason for a brief absence from the centre of political life. There was another motive which made him anxious to go. This was the

personal question which had been raised in connection with his own resignation by the revelation of the truth regarding Mr. Parnell's release from Kilmainham. Ministers had suffered seriously from the revelation of that truth, and, as usual, partisans were found who sought to lay upon Mr. Forster the whole responsibility for the odium which the Government had incurred by taking measures against which he had protested. Though resolute in asserting his undoubted right to defend himself, and to make the whole truth known so far as it was essential to the formation of a sound judgment upon the affair, Forster was greatly grieved by the course which events took and by the antagonism which seemed to be created between himself and his old colleagues. To his friend, Mr. Thomas Cooper, he wrote, saying, "Your letters have been a great and real comfort to me. This wretched personal affair into which I have been dragged has been more worry to me than any public event in the course of my life, but I do not see how I could in substance have acted otherwise." He was only absent a few days from England, but, brief as his rest was, it did him good. Writing from Bayeux, March 30th, Mrs. Forster says, "I think our little excursion is answering. William is looking well, studies his 'Murray' and his map with as much interest as if he had never governed Ireland."

The summer passed uneventfully for him.

He was now enjoying to the full his release from the cares and labours of office, and was hardly to be drawn into controversial politics even by the exciting events which were happening in Egypt, and which had led to the retirement of Mr. Bright from the Government. He returned to his old haunts and his old habits, was happy in indulging his love of reading and his passion for old books, and found in the whist-tables at the Reform and the Athenæum the relaxation which had for years been practically denied to him. And here I may introduce a reference to him as a whist-player, for which I am indebted to Mr. James Payn.

"It is curious, and proves the need that almost every nature—and those the most perfect certainly not the least—feels for some sort of relaxation, that a man so earnest and little inclined for frivolity as W. E. Forster was a most enthusiastic whist-player. He never, indeed, wasted his time at it, or gave up a single hour to it, so far as I know, that was owed to more serious matters; but when he was playing I think he enjoyed the game more than any other man I ever knew. If there were only two other men, he would play dummy; if only one, double dummy. And yet he was very much the reverse of a good player. Perhaps he began it too late in life, which is fatal to excellence, even with the most intelligent; but the fact is, he hardly ever got through a rubber quite to his own satisfaction, and still less to that of his partner.

On the other hand, in sweetness of temper and immobility to the worst that Fortune could do for him in the way of ill-luck, he had, in my experience, no equal. He liked the excitement of the game, and was willing, and even eager, to have a bet on it in addition to the ordinary stakes, but of the greed of the gambler he had absolutely nothing. He did not seem to care one halfpenny except for the mere passing triumph of winning, and, considering his play, he was on the whole lucky, whether he won or lost. The vulgar phrase about paying and looking pleasant—a difficult feat, as it would seem, for the great majority of whist-players —might have been invented to suit him, so exactly did it describe his behaviour in adversity. Whist was to him a far greater amusement than to most men, but it went no further; it was never that serious business of life that it is so often made. He was always full of fun over it, did not the least mind having his own play animadverted upon (though he was not spared by any means, for the Board of Green Cloth is no respecter of persons), and was never irritated by any mistake of his partner. One afternoon he had won a good many rubbers of me, and it is quite possible that I may have looked resentful at him for the partiality with which Fortune was treating him. 'If it would be any satisfaction to you, my dear fellow,' he said, with his humorous smile, 'and a relief to your feelings to call me Buckshot, do it.'"

In September and October he paid a long-anticipated visit to Russia. He had always delighted in foreign travel, and it was a real joy to him once more to be permitted to indulge his passion for it. The reader has seen in a previous chapter how he used the opportunities afforded by visits to new scenes and intercourse with strangers to inform his mind, and the present seems a fitting opportunity to give some account of the manner in which he enjoyed those journeys which were taken rather for purposes of recreation than with any serious object. It is from the pen of his wife.

"The journey of 1854 was the first of those brief and almost annual tours which for so many years formed the chief recreation and enjoyment of his life, and which, therefore, require some slight mention. They rather changed their character as time went on and our children began to accompany us; but for many years we usually started for Switzerland or the Italian valleys of the Alps as soon as the session ended, to spend a few weeks among the mountains—he walking and I riding—and as much away from the beaten tracks as possible. We both shared an ardent love of mountain scenery, and they were weeks of great delight to him, in which he threw aside every care of politics or business, and gave himself up to 'play.' Not that public interests could always be put aside; for I remember that, in 1857, the news of the disasters in the Indian mutiny,

as we read them in the Italian papers, made him so miserable, that we cut short our tour and returned home.

"He was a delightful traveller—for nothing ever came amiss to him, unless it were a spell of bad weather which interfered with a glacier expedition; and to the little *désagréments* which often make such a serious drawback to the pleasures of a tour, he was singularly indifferent, while interests of varied kinds were never wanting. Wherever we were travelling, the social and material condition of the country people, their way of living, their elections, their military service, were an unfailing subject of interest to him, about which, in spite of his limited command of languages, he contrived to extract a surprising amount of information in friendly and sociable talk with people as he went along. He was keenly alive also to historical associations, but especially to all that were connected with the Middle Ages, and an old castle with a history had attractions for him which he could seldom resist, however inconvenient the delay might be.

"Still, the mountains, as I have said, were his chief object. He had always been a vigorous walker, and was elected a member of the Alpine Club in 1859, but in our earlier journeys he was content with the walking in which my pony could accompany him—excursions, of a few days at a time, among the remoter valleys and low passes,

when we would start in the early morning and go on for ten or twelve hours with but short halts, taking an easy day at some mountain inn before we started again; and many were the brief but pleasant holidays we spent in this way—in the Pyrenees, the Tyrol, the Italian valleys of the Alps, the Dolomites, and our well-loved Switzerland. But gradually the love of snow and glacier climbing grew upon him; and although, of course, beginning Alpine climbing as he did after middle life (and also out of consideration for my fears) he never attempted the greater Alpine feats, yet his spirit and endurance carried him through undertakings to which his training and his somewhat heavy frame seemed little suited, and he enjoyed a high ascent or an arduous expedition among the snowfields with all the zest and keenness of a boy. 'Thou must remember,' he wrote, in answer to some remonstrance about risk, 'that there is an awful grandeur among these snowy heights to be met with nowhere below; and, besides, even if such ascents be no better than sport, climbing mountains is at any rate no more foolish than hunting foxes.' His enjoyment of it lasted to the end, and, indeed, outlasted his strength. In 1884, we went for a fortnight to Grindelwald, and after an interval of several years he was delighted to get upon a glacier again, and was out for many hours. But the stress and toil of the last few years had told upon him, and the

exertion brought on an attack of shivering and illness which showed that it must not be repeated; so that was his last day upon a glacier.

"In passing from the subject of his holiday mountaineering, I will quote the brief recollections of him as an Alpine climber which were contributed to the *Alpine Journal* after his death, by his dear and old friend, Mr. John Ball, F.R.S. The recollections refer to a walking-tour they made together in Carinthia in 1865, which always stood high among my husband's pleasantest memories.

"'Nature had scarcely designed W. E. Forster for an Alpine climber. He had great bodily strength and endurance, but was not very active, and he had had no early training to develop the flexibility of the muscles. But he had intense enjoyment in the grandeur and beauty of mountain scenery, and for the rest the same indomitable pluck that he displayed in other fields of action carried him through all difficulties. He had been used to ramble over the hills and fells of the north of England, but had never, to the best of my belief, ascended a high mountain until he first went to Switzerland (I think in 1859), when he was already past forty. His first ascent was that of Mont Blanc. In the same year he was elected a member of our club. In the course of an excursion in the Eastern Alps in 1865, I made two ascents with him, in each of which the qualities of his nature were well shown.

"'The Terglou, in Carniola, is one of those rock pinnacles which look much more formidable than they really are. The main peak (extremely steep on all sides) is connected with a minor peak, easy of access by a rock *arête* so narrow that the usual course is to pass it astride, one leg hanging on each side. Facing you, the main peak looks as steep as the corner of an old French roof. Forster was suffering from a severe headache, the result of bad food and a bad night at the Belpole Alp, and when we had reached the summit of the Little Terglou and saw what was before us, I suggested to him to rest under a rock and await my return. If the ascent had appeared easy he would doubtless have taken my advice, but the idea of flinching from a difficulty was intolerable to him. He insisted on going forward, and made the ascent, finding (as usual with him) some difficulty in accomplishing the descent.

"'Our second joint ascent was that of the Cima Tosa, the highest of the Dolomites between Val Rendena and Molveno, then believed to be an untouched peak. We started from Molveno with a man (Nicolosi) who was supposed to know the mountain. He led us by a long *détour* to a point from which the ascent was plainly impossible. I then took the lead, and after another *détour* we reached the little glacier from which I believe all subsequent ascents from this side have been made. Above some steep but apparently practicable rocks

the highest peak seemed to promise no difficulty, but probably some delay in step-cutting, as the snow was hard. By this time the day was far spent. I knew that my friend could not go fast, and that the descent through the Val delle Seghe would lie in great part over loose blocks, very awkward at night. I accordingly put the case to him, telling him that it was quite possible that if we persisted we should not reach Molveno that night. His answer was decided. We should complete the ascent if it were practicable and take our chance for the rest. We did so, reached the summit, consumed much time in the descent, and were benighted amid a mass of angular blocks in unstable equilibrium! The day had been cloudy, but after waiting half an hour the moon came out, and we finally reached Molveno about 11 p.m.

"'I have been fortunate many times in travelling companions, but have known none to compare with Forster. Along with the deep interest of his conversation there were none of the drawbacks which naturally attend on the society of men of strong character. Entirely unselfish, he was tolerant and patient in a unique degree. Occasional annoyances and inconveniences merely furnished matter for grim but kindly humour that made them positively pleasant to his companion. A nature so pure and lofty never appeared so completely at home as amid the grand solitudes of the mountains.'—*Alpine Journal.*

"I pass on to the journeys of later years, when our children were our companions, and the walking and riding of younger days was exchanged for the large carriage and voiturier. He still lost no opportunity of a long walk or mountain climb, and never returned from either without bringing back some rare or favourite flower which he knew would be prized.

"In these later tours I recall especially our early start in the lovely summer or autumn mornings, from some sleeping-place among the mountains; the fresh sunlight falling on the dewy grass, the morning mists softly uprolling from the mountain sides,—and the delightful sense that we were setting forth on a long day's journey into a world of beauty. It took some time to get us all settled with our maps and guide-books at hand; then, as soon as we were settled, he or I would often read a Psalm of praise. I can hear now the tone of his voice, so deep and reverent; but indeed his reading of the Bible, and especially of the Psalms, was always beautiful, and those who had chanced on any occasion to hear him would often tell me how much it had struck them.

"But I must bring to an end these slight and wandering notes of the holidays of many years, leaving untouched his journey to the Carpathian Mountains and Hungary, and visit to the Balkan provinces and Constantinople in 1876, during the height of the Eastern question; our journey to

Russia and the Northern capitals in 1882; and his cruise in the Mediterranean and visit to Bulgaria in 1883. The daughter who was his sole and happy companion in the journey to Constantinople, and who was with us in all our tours afterwards, has given a few of her own recollections of them,* without which mine would be most one-sided and incomplete."

He returned from Russia towards the close of October, restored to something like his old physical and mental vigour and freshness. Parliament had been summoned for an autumn session when he got back to London, the special work to be done being the passing of a series of rules affecting the procedure of the House. He appeared in his place in the House, but did not take any conspicuous part in the debate, save when the question which had so long been uppermost in his mind—that of slavery—was touched upon in connection with Egyptian affairs.

To his Wife.

"November 12th, 1882.

"My dearest Wife,

"My journey into the City is like returning to the occupation and interests of my youth. I am going to the old Anti-Slavery Office in New Broad Street to get up information for my short speech on Wednesday. The demand for boys for

* Vide Chapter III., vol. 2.

eunuchs and domestic slaves is really as destructive as for girls. The weight of the meeting falls on me, as I have to move the important resolution. I have seen Dillon, who evidently wishes us to press the Government to urge on the Khedive the abolition of *slavery*, as the real means of stopping the slave trade.

"I hope to-morrow I shall hear that matters are settled at Glasgow—I do not wish to be cheated out of my opportunity there.

"I have material for two political speeches: the Liberalism of the future for the club, which is mainly composed of young men,—an attempt to gauge the new forces of political life,—and Home Rule for the public meeting. Just now I am more able to say exactly what I think than at any previous time. I have also promised to open a higher board school. . . ."

The visit to Glasgow, to which allusion was made in the foregoing letter, was for him one of the brightest spots in the political history of the year. He had been elected President of the Gladstone Club in that city, and had accepted an invitation to preside at the annual dinner. His visit in the middle of December was made the occasion of a great demonstration, not merely of the political principles of the Liberals of Glasgow, but of their personal admiration for Forster himself. The dinner of the Gladstone Club, usually a simple

social gathering, became in his honour a banquet of an imposing character, at which not merely great numbers of the younger Liberals of the west of Scotland, but many leading men were present. Forster spoke at length after dinner, on the question of Ireland, urging that the Land Act should be left to bring forth its legitimate fruits, and that Parliament should give clear expression to its opinion upon the question of Home Rule. On the following day, December 15th, he addressed a great meeting of Liberals in St. Andrew's Hall. His reception was an enthusiastic one, and the resolution of welcome, which was carried without a dissentient voice, concluded with an expression of the hope that he would soon again be enabled to take part in the work of the Government. His speech on this occasion dealt with the political questions of the time—Egypt, the right of the agricultural labourer to the suffrage, the Transvaal and the duties of England towards the native races in South Africa and other portions of the Empire. On December 16th he opened a board school at Govan, making a speech upon education; and finally, on December 18th, the incidents of a visit which was very much in the nature of a personal triumph, reached their culminating point in the presentation to him of the freedom of the city. The whole visit was most pleasing and satisfactory to Mr. Forster; and none who knew him could doubt that the warmth of the sympathy shown

towards him by the Scotch Liberals was intensely grateful. "The fact that he was obliged to separate from his colleagues," said the *Glasgow Herald* in reference to his visit, "has not in the least degree diminished the respect which a constituency devoted to Mr. Gladstone entertains towards him." All the more gratifying was the evidence which Glasgow afforded of this fact, inasmuch as in some other places he was looked upon with coldness and suspicion, not because he had failed to do his best when in Ireland, but because he had ventured to hold his own views in opposition to those of the other members of the Government of Mr. Gladstone.

The position which he now held in the political world was a peculiar one. In some respects it might be described as a position of isolation. In retiring from office he had secured his own independence. But at that epoch in the history of English Liberalism it was more than the mere loss of office which a man had to fear when he ventured to assert his independence of opinion in face of a powerful and united party. Forster was destined for the remainder of his public career to find himself always "under suspicion," so far as certain politicians were concerned. Any word that he uttered, any step that he took in connection with public affairs, however innocent, was liable to be misinterpreted by those who seemed to think it impossible that any motives higher than merely

personal ones could influence a statesman. Not even the sneers of the press, or the censures of the caucus could induce Forster, however, to resign that freedom of judgment and of action which was the compensation he had received for his loss of office. Moreover, though he was in these years in a chronic state of war with one wing of the Liberal party, his position in the House of Commons and among his fellow-countrymen was higher than it had ever been before. In Parliament, his speeches were marked by an oratorical power such as even his own friends had hardly suspected him of commanding, whilst throughout the country his opinions upon the great questions of the time exercised an influence upon the public judgment more potent than that of any other public man save Mr. Gladstone. Freedom from official restraints enabled his strong individuality to assert itself fully, and though he was at the head of no organization, controlled no caucus, and did not even command the support of a single metropolitan newspaper, his personality became one of the most conspicuous and powerful factors in the politics of the day.

The public history of the years which followed his retirement from office must be told briefly. And yet it may be doubted whether, during any corresponding period in his life, Forster ever played so important a part in directing the thoughts of his fellow-countrymen. Early in January, 1883,

he presided at the annual dinner of the Leeds Liberal Club. He had many devoted friends in Leeds, and his appearance among them, whether at meetings of the club or at other political gatherings, was always hailed with enthusiasm. His speech at this particular dinner was memorable because of its relation to Irish affairs. He discussed, as the chief topic of domestic politics, the question of the extension of household suffrage to the counties—a measure of which he had long been a most ardent supporter. But on this occasion he not merely advocated the early passing of such a bill, but insisted that, if passed, it must apply to Ireland as well as England. The only way of meeting the demand for Home Rule and the dissolution of the Union, he declared, was by saying, "We will treat them as we treat ourselves." Acting on this principle, he recommended that if a measure for the reform of the local government of England was introduced its provisions should be extended to Ireland. These declarations produced a great impression at the time; for up to the moment when they were made, no man of Forster's rank in political life had advocated the lowering of franchise in Ireland in connection with the passing of the Household Suffrage Bill in England. The fact that he was the first to make such a proposal proved that nothing which had happened in connection with Irish affairs had lessened his desire to deal justly to Irishmen or had affected his judgment upon Irish questions.

But at the time when he was thus in advance of many members of the Government in advocating a reduction of the franchise in Ireland, his opinion upon one grave question remained as strong as ever. This was his conviction that a terrible moral responsibility rested upon Mr. Parnell and the Land League leaders for their failure adequately to denounce the crimes and outrages which were perpetrated in Ireland by those who believed that they were serving the purposes and carrying out the real wishes of the principal members of the league. His speech during the debate on the address at the opening of the session of 1883 set forth this uncompromising belief of his with a force which made a profound impression at the time upon English public opinion. Forster was being openly attacked, not merely by the Parnellites, but by English Radicals, as though, forsooth, the lamentable condition of Ireland, and the crimes and conspiracies which were at that time being dragged to light, were in some mysterious fashion the fruits of his two years' secretaryship. It was in the midst of a debate in which this idea seemed to pervade the minds of not a few, that he interposed, and brought against Mr. Parnell the most tremendous indictment ever laid against a responsible politician in the English Parliament by a fellow-member. No one who was a witness of that exciting scene when Mr. Forster, speaking amid the furious cries of Mr. Parnell's

followers, and the wild cheers of the English members, laid statement after statement before the House in support of his opinion as to the moral responsibility of Mr. Parnell, will ever forget it. Nor was the impression which he made upon the mind of England lessened by the fact that Mr. Parnell, instead of attempting to reply to the indictment brought against him, took refuge in personal abuse of his accuser. This was the last important episode in connection with Ireland of Mr. Forster's career in the House of Commons. For the future he was able to feel that he had at least liberated his mind upon that subject which had always been uppermost in his thoughts—the outrages,—and that nothing further was needed from him to enlighten the opinion of the public.

In the early part of the session of 1883 the question of our obligations in South Africa, and our duty towards native chiefs who had trusted in our promises, arose in connection with affairs in Bechuanaland. Forster, it is hardly necessary to say, strenuously supported the rights of the natives. No other line would have been possible to him at any period in his life—unless he had been prepared to deny his own most dearly cherished convictions and to reverse the whole current of his sympathies. Yet, seeing that his warm support of the claims of native chiefs who had jeopardized their own interests because of their belief in the honour of England brought him into collision with

the Government, there were some who professed to think that it was rather for the purpose of attacking ministers than of serving the people of South Africa that he had taken action. It is needless to discuss this charge here. All his communications with the Colonial Secretary, Lord Derby, as well as with Mr. Mackenzie and the other enlightened Englishmen who strove to procure justice for the weak races of South Africa, might be cited in refutation of the accusation. It was one which affected Forster himself far too slightly, however, to be worthy of special notice. He was only conscious of the fact that he was treading in the footsteps of his father and his uncle. The traditional contempt for "the nigger" was something the nature of which he was not even able to conceive, and he was every bit as anxious to see the people of Bechuanaland treated with justice by the English Government as he would have been if they had been inhabitants of his own Wharfedale.

For the remainder of his life, South African affairs occupied much of Mr. Forster's time, and he threw himself into the cause of the natives with all his old enthusiasm. With characteristic energy and thoroughness he made a careful study of the South African Blue books, at that period abnormally numerous and voluminous, unearthed the telegraphic despatch of the English general, upon which the Bechuanas relied in their appeal for

help, and completely refuted the plea of the Government that these people were not our allies, and that we were in no way responsible for what happened to them. This point gained, he did not relax his efforts, but continued, both in the House of Commons and outside, to urge their claims, until he had secured the establishment of a protectorate over the country of Bechuanaland.

The question next arose of a disputed boundary between the Transvaal and Bechuanaland, and, after a long wrangle between the High Commissioner and the Boer leaders, both the High Commissioner and a Boer deputation came to England. The proposal of the Transvaal was to so extend its borders in the direction of Bechuanaland as to include not only the most fertile "gardens" or farms of the natives, but also to take in the main road from Cape Colony north-west to Central Africa. This road, being bounded on the west side by the waterless Kalahari desert, was the only possible route outside the Transvaal by which our traders could reach the rapidly opening native markets in the centre of the continent.

Mr. Forster's study of the country on behalf of the Bechuanas at once enabled him to see that this proposal, if agreed to, would completely shut out British trade from the markets of the future, and he exerted himself in every way to prevent so disastrous a result. After an anxious struggle, he was successful in this. The Boers were given a

considerable portion of native territory, and were forgiven a large part of their acknowledged debt to England; but though their boundary was brought to within a few miles of the road, they were not allowed to include it. Thus the trade route to the interior of Africa was preserved to British commerce, and a service rendered to the empire, the value of which, in but a few years, will be reckoned in sums of millions annually.

On the return of the Boer delegates, a new attempt was made to spoil Mr. Forster's work. A deputy-commissioner, Mr. John Mackenzie, who had resided for twenty-five years in the locality, had been selected by the High Commissioner when in England, and appointed to administer the new territory. Intrigues were now set on foot in this district, emanating from the Transvaal, to upset the Government of her Majesty in Bechuanaland. These were supported by similar intrigues carried on at Cape Town by friends and sympathizers with the Boers. They resulted in the resignation of the Deputy-Commissioner, and the appointment of another, who endeavoured, by various forms of surrender and conciliation, to appease the Transvaal agitators, who, however, soon reduced the commencement of government which had been established to chaos. The natives were attacked, murdered, and robbed, and her Majesty's representative was personally threatened.

Again Mr. Forster urged upon the Government

the necessity of fulfilling their obligations and enforcing respect to the Queen and Government. With the assistance, this time, of Mr. Chamberlain, who had before opposed any interference, he was successful in obtaining the despatch of Sir Charles Warren's expedition, before which the marauders of the Transvaal retreated across the border without firing a shot. A settled government was at length established, and the Bechuanas placed in the enjoyment of a certain measure of peace.

It will be noticed that throughout this affair, which extended over nearly three years, the keynote of his action and his argument was the fulfilment of obligations. These, once undertaken, he held to be sacred. He frequently urged the folly of trying to shirk them, a course which he proved from history invariably led to shame, inconvenience, and increased expenditure.

To his Wife.

"Athenæum Club, November 12th, 1884.

"My dearest Wife,

"Our South African lecture went off well last evening. A good attendance. There was a dinner before the lecture, at which I presided, sitting between Merriman and Sir John Macdonald, the Canadian Premier, who was capital company. The room was very crowded and hot, and I went home with one of my bad colds, which, however, is better this morning, thanks to a longer night.

"I hurried down to receive Sir Charles Warren, who came to pay his parting call. He leaves to-morrow, having at last got his way with the War Office.

"His large force of volunteers is quite a new departure in military affairs, and immensely interested Oakeley; but the estimate is out this morning, and it is a staggering one—about £650,000 for the army, and £50,000 for the navy. This is penny-wise pound-foolish policy with a vengeance, and I expect the Radicals will be furious."

In the autumn of 1883 he paid another visit to the East. His object, on this occasion, was to see for himself the changes which had been wrought in Bulgaria as the result of the Russo-Turkish war. He was delighted with what he saw in the new principality. The growth of civilization, the capacity for self-government shown throughout the Balkan provinces, and the manifest love of education cherished by those who had so recently escaped from a cruel bondage, all satisfied him that the fruits of the events of 1877 and 1878 had been wholly good. The journey, the first part of which was spent on board the hospitable yacht of Mr. (now Sir John) Pender, did him good. Writing to his wife on the homeward journey, he spoke of its beneficial effects, and added that he was returning home "keen for work." An account

of the impressions which he derived whilst in the East, appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of October 31st.

The year 1884 was one in which Forster displayed special activity in political life. He had recovered completely from the effects of the worry and anxiety of his Irish secretaryship; he felt himself absolved by past events from the necessity of devoting any large portion of his time to those Irish questions which occupied so much of the attention of Parliament, and he was able to devote all his strength of mind and body to matters in which he took the deepest personal interest. Of these the proceedings in South Africa have already been mentioned. In domestic politics the question of the hour was that of the Household Suffrage Bill, which was brought forward early in the session, only to be rejected by the House of Lords. He gave his warmest support to this measure, and, after its rejection, he was prominent among those who took part in the agitation in the country on its behalf, and against the House of Lords. The greatest of these popular demonstrations was that held at Leeds on October 4th. The scene of the gathering was Woodhouse Moor, on which, nearly twenty years before, Forster had appeared as an advocate of Parliamentary reform, at a time when the artisans of the towns were still waiting for enfranchisement. True to his faith in popular Government, he once more presented him-

self before a West Riding audience, on a spot of historic interest. Many scores of thousands of persons had met to demonstrate their resolve that the Reform Bill should be carried, despite the House of Lords, and Forster received from them a welcome of special warmth. It was the last great public gathering of the kind he was destined to attend.

But a question far surpassing, in the intensity of the interest which it aroused, that of the Household Suffrage Bill, engaged attention during the year. It was that of the Soudan, and of the fate of General Gordon. For the Egyptian policy of the English Government Forster had no responsibility. He had left the Ministry before the intervention of this country at Cairo had been resolved upon, and though keenly interested in the course of events, he had not taken a prominent part in the debates on Egyptian questions. His chief interest in these questions seemed, indeed, to be based upon his life-long abhorrence of slavery. But from the time when the resolve of the English Government to abandon the Soudan was taken, and when General Gordon was despatched to Khartoum for the purpose of superintending the operation, Forster began to take an active and prominent part in the Parliamentary debates upon the question. Added to his personal interest in the slavery question, was his strong admiration for the character of General Gordon.

From the moment at which his figure became the central one in connection with the affairs of Egypt, Forster's interest in these affairs became deep and absorbing.

The policy of the Government met with his strong disapproval. Hesitation, and a timid shrinking from responsibilities, not because they had not been incurred, but because they were too arduous and costly in their character to be easily fulfilled, were failings which he had always strongly condemned, and he condemned them now with special emphasis when they affected not only the honour of England but the very life of such a man as Gordon. At the outset of the session of 1884, Forster had criticized unsparingly the blunder committed by ministers in their dealings with Egypt. His speech naturally excited the anger of the partisan press. He was taunted as "the candid friend," and once again he had to submit to that wholesale imputation of motives to which by this time he had become so well accustomed. But he was in earnest now, if ever he had been in earnest in his life, and though he felt keenly his position of isolation, and regretted now, as he had ever done, the anger of his constituents and his old political friends, he refused to be moved by these things so much as a hair's-breadth. His whole heart was filled with the idea of Gordon's danger at Khartoum—and that he was in real danger there Forster had been one of the very first

to perceive—and of the dishonour which must attach to England if he were left to perish. To ministers, alas! it was not given to see Gordon's danger so clearly, and they resisted any acknowledgment of it, and put off any attempt to succour their agent. Forster, on his part, insisted, with what he himself felt to be wearisome iteration, upon endeavouring to impress the truth on the minds of his former colleagues.

It is not to be denied that his speeches and questions on the subject of Khartoum and Gordon, during the session of 1884, were very damaging to the Ministry, and one cannot be surprised at the bitterness with which they were resented by partisan newspapers and organizations. The question now, however, is not whether they did or did not injure a Liberal Ministry, but whether they were founded upon sound or unsound views of events in the Soudan. To that question only one answer can be returned. It unhappily proved that Forster was right when he strove, with an earnestness which was remarkable even for him, to awaken the minds of ministers to the reality of Gordon's danger, and when he besought them not to delay until it was too late the attempt to carry to him the succour which he was certain to require. That being the case, the question of party discipline, and of the extent to which he was guilty of injuring his own political associates, is not one that any man possessed of ordinary self-respect will care to

discuss. But it is impossible for one who, like the present writer, was in almost constant intercourse with Mr. Forster during that terrible time of national suspense, to refrain from speaking of the extraordinary depth of feeling which he showed with regard to the question of Gordon's safety. If it had been a question of saving the life of one who stood nearest to him in blood, he could not have felt it more intensely. His voice would quiver under the emotion which stirred him, and his eye grow dim as he discussed Gordon's character and history, at that time when, alone in the Soudan, he was standing between a surging mass of barbarism and the helpless creatures whom it threatened to submerge. To any one who knew Forster, the notion that he would allow the interests of any political party, and still less his own personal interests as a politician, to interfere with the performance of a duty so sacred as that which he felt he owed to the honour of his country and to General Gordon, must have seemed utterly absurd. If his whole political future had depended upon his action on the question of the Soudan he would not have wavered in the course which he took. Whether under the censure or the applause of his fellow-countrymen, he felt bound to go straight forward, in the hope that he might effect his end, and induce the Ministry to fulfil effectually the responsibilities which they had incurred at Khartoum. It can hardly, I think, be doubted that the

resolve of ministers to send an expedition to the relief of Gordon and the beleaguered garrison was largely due to the persistency with which Forster pressed them on the question. That the expedition arrived too late to effect its purpose was no fault of his.

It was in the course of one of his most urgent appeals to ministers not to delay the sending out of an expedition that Forster used words regarding Mr. Gladstone which were strangely misinterpreted at the time, and which were used by a section of his political opponents from that time forward as a means of assailing him. Speaking of the danger of Gordon's position, he said, "I believe every one but the Prime Minister is already convinced of that danger, . . . and I attribute his not being convinced to his wonderful power of persuasion. He can persuade most people of most things, and, above all, he can persuade himself of almost anything." It is difficult now to realize the fact that these words were resented by Lord Hartington as "a bitter and personal and evidently highly prepared and long-reflected-over attack upon the sincerity of Mr. Gladstone." They were nothing of the kind, and Forster immediately repudiated the notion that he had ever dreamed of imputing personal insincerity to one to whom the charge, he declared, was peculiarly inapplicable. Nevertheless, in the heat of partisan anger, his declaration regarding Mr. Gladstone was treated as a mortal sin.

The Bradford Liberal Association was summoned together to censure him, and he was subjected to insults and annoyances which might well have led him to retire in weariness and disgust from an arena in which apparently respect for independence of opinion and honesty of conviction was altogether subordinated to party considerations.

The storm of party anger which was raised against him raged with a fierceness which would have intimidated most men, but Mr. Forster neither quailed before it nor indulged in any demonstrations of defiance. He simply bore himself with manly calmness amid the tempest, maintaining the even tenor of his way, and continuing his determined efforts to induce ministers to send their expedition to the Soudan at the earliest possible moment, as though no such thing as a caucus or a vote of censure at Bradford was known to him. The only remark he ever made regarding the speech of Lord Hartington, which had been the signal for this outburst of political intolerance, was that which he made to Lord Hartington himself in the lobby on the evening on which the incident occurred. "You were very unfair to me to-night; but you had such a bad case, that I suppose you could not help yourself." It was immediately after this episode that he spent many days in seeking out all the authorities on the question—soldiers, travellers, and men of science—in order to ascertain the earliest moment at

which the Nile would rise to a sufficient height to permit of an expedition being sent up the river to Khartoum.

At last the Government were convinced, and the expedition started. Its progress was followed with breathless interest by the nation. This is not the place in which to tell the tragical story of its end and of the fate of Gordon. So far as Forster was concerned, the news, when it came, fell with all the weight of a great personal affliction. "I can think of nothing but Gordon and the Soudan," he notes in his diary the day after he first heard the fatal tidings. No one who saw much of him at that period of his life can forget the unceasing interest which he showed in every phase of the expedition under Lord Wolseley, the eagerness with which he welcomed all who could tell anything new regarding the position of General Gordon, and the care with which he strove to make himself master of all the facts which bore upon his fate. There was something singularly touching in the depth of the feeling which Forster showed all through this painful episode in our national history. It was a feeling which seemed rather to befit a young enthusiast than the busy man of affairs, who had passed through so much that was calculated to try his temper and chill his sympathies. How young his heart had remained through all his varied and bitter experiences, and how warm and true were his affections, was proved to those around

him by the grief with which he mourned the fate of General Gordon.

There was one other great question which, after the death of General Gordon, occupied the first place in Forster's mind. This was the question of the relationship of England to her colonies. To write the history of his connection with the question would be to tell the story of the Imperial Federation League. All through his public life Mr. Forster had been anxious to see the bonds made stronger which united England to the other portions of the empire. His address upon the colonies at Edinburgh in 1875, had given him an opportunity of expressing his profound sense of the imperial dignity and grandeur of our country. It was no new thing, this deep-seated idea of the glorious character of our heritage of empire. He had been conscious of it almost from boyhood, and in no small degree it had modified the influences of his birth and early training, putting him to a certain extent out of harmony with some, at least, of the traditions of the Society of Friends. But along with the sense of the grandeur of our imperial position there had always been present a sense, not less strong, of the responsibility which it imposed upon us. He felt the full force of the parable of the talents, in this as in so many other matters that engaged his thoughts in public life. To have much was to owe much. All through his life he had believed this, and had striven to act up to the

belief; and now, when his day's work was drawing to its appointed end, he sought to carry out this cardinal doctrine of his moral creed in the largest field of action which was open to him.

He had consistently preached our duties towards the weak and dependent subject races of the empire. He now found himself leading a movement, the object of which was to enable each portion of the empire to do its duty by the whole. On July 29th, 1884, he mentions in his diary, "A noteworthy event to-day. I took the chair at the conference on Colonial Federation at Westminster Palace Hotel—a real success." The object of the conference, which was attended by many influential representatives of the colonies, as well as by leading members of both political parties, was the formation of a society for the special purpose of enlightening public opinion throughout the empire, "as to the advantages of permanent unity, and as to the nature of the different forms of federal government, so that the people of the empire, both in these isles and beyond the seas, may be the better able to decide as to the exact form of that government which they may prefer whenever they shall feel that the time has arrived for its adoption." The conference not only resulted in the formation of a provisional committee, but in a demonstration of no ordinary character against the policy of those who are prepared to view with favour rather than with distaste the withdrawal of

our colonies from all direct connection with the mother-country. Forster's speech in favour of federation was an emphatic one, and at the request of the conference he accepted the presidency of the newly founded committee. An adjourned meeting of the conference was held on November 18th to report progress, and again Mr. Forster occupied the chair. A detailed scheme for the formation of the Imperial Federation League was laid before those present on behalf of the provisional committee, and once more Mr. Forster urged the necessity of union upon the representatives of all portions of the empire. He was strongly in favour of creating a sentiment in favour of federation, and from that time forward he laboured assiduously, both by speech and pen, in order to effect this object. The details of a scheme of federation, he felt, would come in good time; the first thing was to create in the minds of the English people throughout the empire the conviction that federation was to be desired. The good work to which he thus devoted much of his time in the latest months of his public life is still in its infancy. Forster himself had glowing visions of its future growth. It was not given to him to live to see them realized; but if the day should ever come which sees the British empire united in the bonds of an equitable federation, to Forster will belong the honour of having been foremost among those who planted the seeds of this mighty and

most beneficent revolution. How deep his interest was for the remainder of his life in the cause of the Imperial Federation League was shown, not only by his devotion to the business of the committee, but by the eagerness with which he welcomed every new convert to the cause of federation. Writing to his wife immediately before the meeting of the conference in November, he said—

"Athenæum Club, November 14th, 1884.

"The more I look at it, the more I find that Tuesday's meeting is critical, and its success, I fear, depends on my opening speech. I must not only carefully consider what to say, but I must have Sunday and Monday for conference with Oakeley and one or two others, and also I must be myself in the arrangements for the conduct of the meeting, speakers, etc. I have two agents-general still to see; but I hope to see them to-morrow. . . .

"There is more hopeful news about Gordon—see papers' account of answer to question—but as yet Government does not know the date of the letter or its contents.

"I fear my dearest wife will think me faithless in not coming down; but, after all, this colonial business remains my great work.

"The Cape debate yesterday was a poor affair. I thought it best to reserve myself for Thursday, if necessary to speak at all; but Chamberlain

spoke well. I told him and Childers that, as at last they were behaving well, I would glorify them if they wished it; but Chamberlain said 'that would finish them!'

"Thine,

"W. E. FORSTER."

Again writing to Mrs. Forster, in June, 1885, he encloses a Reuter's telegram from Melbourne, announcing that the Victorian Branch Imperial Federation League had been formed at a crowded and enthusiastic meeting, and says, "My dearest wife,—I was woke this morning by the enclosed telegram. Is it not pleasant? We may set it against many unpleasant things. Good of Reuter to send it."

During the winter of 1884–5 he suffered severely in consequence of an injury which necessitated the removal of the great-toe nail. For some time in the early part of 1885, after undergoing this operation, his appearance was such as to cause anxiety to his friends; but as the spring advanced he recovered, and again began to work with his accustomed energy. The session was an eventful one, inasmuch as it witnessed the fall of Mr. Gladstone's Government and the installation of Lord Salisbury in office.

At that time, the Irish Question was still much in men's minds, and there were rumours abroad of an intention on the part of some members of the

Liberal Government to attempt to meet the demands of Mr. Parnell and his party for local home rule. The following letter, addressed to his son-in-law, deals with this subject—

To Mr. R. Vere O'Brien.

"80, Eccleston Square, June 6th, 1885.

"F——'s report of my talk last night is very correct; but I write a line to say—First, that you will, I know, consider it strictly confidential; and, secondly, that I am anxious to get from you as soon as may be your opinion as to this Dublin board.

"In itself, it is good. Education and draining ought to be locally managed. No doubt the board would mismanage at first, but there would be no harm in this. Experience would be gained, and home quarrels would to some extent replace hostility to the Imperial Government. But the real question is—Can such board be prevented from being a lever for separation—or, rather, for Grattan's Parliament, which means separation first, and then reconquest?

"I gather from to-day's papers that the split in the Cabinet is not yet mended, and I expect Dilke and Chamberlain are holding out for a public promise of this board, without which they will not assent to the Crimes Bill. This accounts for C——'s earnest desire that I should point to some such measure in the debate on the Crimes Act. He wants to make use of me in Cabinet discussion. I

ask myself whether it would be safe, and might not do good, for me to point to strong local government, and express a wish for it, if we could have reason to believe that it would not be used for separation.

"It will be a pity, however, if the Land Purchase Bill gets ignored, and I wish you would send your letter to the *Pall Mall;*—if you like to send it to me, I will forward it. . . .

"Yours ever affectionately,

"W. E. FORSTER."

Forster's chief Parliamentary work during the year was not, however, connected with any of the great political questions. He had been appointed chairman of the committee to consider the Manchester Ship Canal Bill. In two previous sessions it had been impossible to get the bill through both Houses of Parliament, because of the immense magnitude of the cases which were presented on behalf of the promoters and opponents of the measure respectively. It seemed certain that the bill would fail again for the same reason; and it undoubtedly would have failed if it had fallen into the hands of any man whose energy and power of work were less than Forster's. As it was, by dint of sheer indomitable industry, such as that which in past times had enabled him to manage the business of the Education Office and to see the Education Bill through committee, and more

recently had aided him in the performance of his great work in Ireland, he was able to carry the inquiry regarding the canal through committee, and to secure for the people of Manchester the opportunity which they so eagerly coveted. But the cost to himself was very great. It was all the greater because, along with the heavy labour which was thus imposed upon him, he had to contend with not a few personal "worries." His relations with the Radical section of the Bradford Liberals were again seriously strained. They could not apparently forget the independent line he had taken with regard both to South African politics and to the relief of General Gordon. Abundantly as events had justified the course which he took, he was not forgiven by many persons in his own constituency, because in taking that course he had come into collision with the Ministry.

The Redistribution Act—of which it may be remarked parenthetically he had been from the first a very warm supporter—had led to the subdivision of Bradford into different constituencies. It was impossible for him ever again to sit as the representative of "the borough of Bradford" in the House of Commons. His long connection with the whole constituency must end, through no fault on either side. Forster determined, however, that it should not end until he had publicly and formally "given an account of his stewardship" to those who for twenty-five years had

enabled him to speak in their name in Parliament. He asked the Liberal Association as usual to make arrangements for the meeting at which he was to speak. They declined to do so, and it was left to him individually to summon his constituents to hear his review of nearly a quarter of a century of public work.

So high did the feeling of the official Liberals run, that active attempts were made to induce his constituents to stay away from his meeting, which he had fixed for August 1st. It was with the knowledge that there was this bitter feeling against him in certain quarters in Bradford, and that he was left, after all these years of loyal and devoted service, practically alone by the recognized chiefs of the Liberal party, that he prepared to meet those of his constituents who were willing to hear his farewell address. Few, probably, of those who—doubtless from conscientious motives—adopted this attitude of hostility towards him, knew the pain which they occasioned. Nothing but a sense of the value of that principle of political independence for which he was struggling, and a consciousness of his own single-mindedness, sustained him.

Before I speak of the great meeting, in which for the last time he discussed those questions in which throughout his life he had been so deeply interested, I must quote the account given by his secretary, Mr. Loring, of the work he went through at that time. This was practically his farewell to

public life in England, and the reader will be interested in knowing how these closing days of a great career were occupied.

"On Friday, July 1st," writes Mr. Loring, "I came to Eccleston Square early (9.30) at Mr. Forster's request, as there was much business to be got through, and little time available for it. He was to speak at Bradford the next day, and we were to go down to Wharfeside that evening. The Manchester Ship Canal Committee, of which he was chairman, had been reduced to three members, and was working at great pressure. A large sum of money had been spent upon the bill before it reached Mr. Forster's committee, without its fate having been decided, and he felt it imperative that a division should be arrived at upon it by his committee, in order to avoid the continuance of this waste of money. By his personal influence he had induced both sides to forego the repetition of large portions of the evidence given at former committees, and he strained every nerve in order to ensure the fullest attention and the utmost available time being given by the committee to the evidence which remained. At this time the session was drawing to a close, and the evidence which it was proposed to take was still far from being completed. The only hope was for the committee to come to a decision without hearing evidence upon a portion of the bill. If this was to be done, the decision must be announced that day. We worked

at high pressure all the morning, but did not make much impression on the mass of correspondence which seemed to be in a chronic state of accumulation during those ship canal days. Mr. Forster told me what papers, etc., he should require for the preparation of his speech, which he had not as yet touched, and adding, 'Put these papers in the bag, and we'll do some of them at Wharfeside,' he at 11.50 got into a hansom, and drove to his committee. I had occasion to bring him a letter that day between one and two, and found the committee-room closed, and the decision being arrived at. I got to King's Cross about 5.30. Mr. Forster arrived some three or four minutes before the train started. We dined in the train. He told me that he had not had any luncheon, and he certainly looked as if he needed food. He had been from a nine o'clock breakfast until 8.30 without breaking his fast. We reached Bradford at 10.30, and after Mr. Forster had paid a visit to the club, started again for Wharfeside, where we arrived about midnight. We soon went to bed, Mr. Forster remarking that our hands would be full the next day. We began upon the speech immediately after breakfast the next morning. After luncheon, we started in the guard's van of a goods train for Otley, where we were to catch a passenger train to Bradford. All the warehouses were closed at Bradford, and I remember wondering as we walked to the hotel

where the meeting was to come from. We assembled in a small room off the hall, and though some anxiety was at first shown (not by Mr. Forster) as to the tone of the meeting, when we heard the people taking up 'Auld Lang Syne' and 'For He's a Jolly Good Fellow,' from the organ, we knew that all was well."

I have quoted this account because of the proof which it affords that even then Mr. Forster's power of work was far above that of most men. The speech, which was prepared in a few hours under the circumstances described by Mr. Loring, was undoubtedly one of the best which he ever made. It was a full and clear review of the political history of England during the twenty-four years and a half of his Parliamentary life, combined with a most powerful exposition of the principles by which his actions had been guided. No one who heard it as it fell from his lips in graphic, telling phrases, each one of which seemed to arouse an echo in the hearts of the audience, could have credited the fact that its preparation had only been begun that morning, and after such a day of labour as Forster had passed through on the Friday. For more than an hour he engaged the close attention of the great multitude packed within the walls of the hall, as he spoke of the American Civil War and the part he had taken in putting an end to the rankling disputes between England and the United States which it left

behind; of the Reform question, its many vicissitudes and ultimate triumph; of Ireland and the work which had fallen to his hands there; and of the Education Act and its fruits. It is noticeable that in his speech he may be almost said to have slurred over the passing of the Education Act. It was evident that he had no wish merely to dwell upon his own achievements. But he was strongly bent upon defending himself from the attacks of those who railed against him for the part he had taken with regard to the expedition to Khartoum. Now, as at all times, he was bent upon having justice for himself, whilst readily granting it to everybody else. One or two passages in the speech have a special interest in view of the fact that this was the last occasion upon which he ever addressed a public audience.

"There is no doubt what the great principles of Liberalism are: equality before the law, progress, the abolition of class restrictions, freedom of the press, ay, and a determination that neither king, nor peer, nor mob shall take away the liberty of any Englishman or Irishman. . . . If there is one thing more than another that I hope to live for and take part in politically, it is the hope that before I die I may see the British realm —a realm extending all the world over, her children, whom she has sent out, themselves self-governing communities—united with her in a bond of peace that shall be an example to the

world. Again, I must thank you for your past confidence and support. And let me say one word. You know that I am in the habit of speaking out. If I have ever hurt any man's feelings in Bradford I am very sorry. I would beg his pardon, if I knew the particular case, and that I was wrong. . . . Again, I thank you. I thank you for this more than for anything else—that for the long time I have been your member, the time that I have taken part in the government of the nation or in the deliberations of Parliament, I have been, not your mere delegate, not your mere mouthpiece, but your representative, doing what I thought to be right; and upon no other condition will I serve you in the future."

Such were the last words spoken by Mr. Forster to a Bradford audience. They were so characteristic of the man, and described so correctly the position which he had held in Parliament, that it was easy to understand the mighty shout of approbation, almost passionate in its character, which went up when he uttered them. Whatever might be the judgment of class or caucus, it was evident that the people of Bradford were on his side in his resolute maintenance of the right of a member of the English Parliament to follow the dictates of his own conscience rather than the wishes of a political organization.

After the meeting he went back to Burley in the highest spirits. That which gave him the

greatest pleasure was not the largeness or the enthusiasm of his audience; but the fact that here and there he had noticed in the densely packed seats the faces of old friends, who were allied to what might be called the official section of the Liberal party in the borough, but who had been true to their representative, and had turned up to support him at that critical moment. With what bright confidence he spoke of the future to one who accompanied him in the train on his return to Burley! He told of his coming visit to Germany, for the sake of his wife's health, and of his consequent abandonment of a projected journey to Canada. "I must be back in October for the election," he said; "there will be plenty for me to do then." Little did those who heard him imagine that he was never again to appear upon the platform where he had so long been a familiar figure, and which he had that afternoon occupied with such conspicuous power and success. On the following day (Sunday), he returned to town, in order that he might be in time to resume his work on the clauses of the Manchester Canal Bill on Monday morning.

But little has been said in these volumes of his merits as a speaker. They were, however, not only noticeable, but peculiar to himself. He never attempted to rival the oratory of Mr. Bright —of which he was a warm, almost a passionate, admirer—or the wonderful flexibility of style and

unsurpassed command of language which have given Mr. Gladstone his great place among Parliamentary speakers. Forster's gifts were entirely different from those possessed by Mr. Bright and Mr. Gladstone. Yet, in his own way, he was one of the most effective Parliamentary speakers of his time. If his sentences were somewhat rough and unpolished, and if they lacked the wealth of illustration and the brilliancy of style which distinguish such men as those I have named, they had a force and freshness which made them always tell upon those whom he addressed. Especially was this the case when he was speaking upon some question on which he felt deeply. At such times, the warmth of his feelings was reflected in the manifest emotion with which he spoke, and no one was allowed to remain in doubt as to what he really meant and felt. He was a severe critic of his own speeches. But, even when he was most dissatisfied with their imperfections, and when he felt that his defects of style and manner must always prevent him from attaining any position as an orator, he had one unfailing source of consolation. He might have been too heavy, or too long, but he "got out what he wanted to say;" and this, after all, seemed to him to be that which was best worth striving after. To him at least speech had not been given for the purpose of concealing his thoughts, and though he might not tickle the ears of his hearers with poetic metaphors or polished

phrases, he never failed to impress those who heard him with a sense of his absolute sincerity, whilst often his roughly-hewn sentences, so manifestly springing from his heart, and not from his lips, moved his audience more deeply than any flight of mere eloquence could have done. The reader has seen with what ease, or rather with what speed, his last speech was composed. But that rapidity of preparation was only attained after long and painful practice. In his early days, the labour of preparing a speech was very great to him. Often many days would be devoted to the task, and when it had been performed he would feel profoundly dissatisfied with the manner in which it had been executed. Throughout his life he never grudged any time or labour that might be needed to enable him to do any work he had undertaken well; and even to the last he never tried to put off those to whom he spoke with a carelessly-prepared speech. Practice had enabled him to put his thoughts together more easily, and to express them more fluently and forcibly than in his early days; but this increased facility in speaking did not absolve him from the duty of carefully ascertaining and sifting his facts, and making sure beforehand that what he had to say to Parliament or his constituents was unassailable so far as its accuracy was concerned. This patient preparation of his case before he ventured to put it before the world was perhaps the feature of his public speak-

ing which gave its highest value to what he said in the eyes of his fellow-countrymen. They knew that when he opened his lips he would, so far as in him lay, tell them that which was true and to the point regarding the question he was discussing; and so, even when they differed from him in judgment, they learned to trust him in statement.

CHAPTER XII.

ILLNESS AND DEATH.

THE account of Mr. Forster's illness and last days, which I am allowed to print here, is from the pen of his wife.

"No one who had seen my husband at the end of his last session would have guessed that his work was done, and that all that remained of a life which had been so full of wide and fruitful activity, of conflict, and of storms, was now to be contracted within the walls of a sick-room during weary months of weakness and pain. The closing weeks of his Parliamentary work had been filled with plans for fresh work during the vacation. Urgent invitations came to him from the Cape, to visit that colony and hold meetings there. He was also pressingly urged to go to Canada, and advocate the cause of Imperial Federation; and this he would have enjoyed, and it was, in fact, decided on and the places were taken, when he gave it up at the last moment, because my health was not strong and he could not make up his mind to leave me.

"He had seldom had a greater pressure of work upon him than during the last eight weeks of the session, when he was Chairman of the Committee on the Manchester Canal Bill. During all that time he may be said to have worked, almost at a stretch, from ten in the morning till he came home long after midnight from the House of Commons. Immediately after breakfast he wrote letters with his secretary, and saw the numerous visitors who came to him by appointment, to take counsel with him on the next step in the Federation movement, of which he was the animating and directing spirit,—or upon the complications of South Africa, and the best means of at once forming public opinion and keeping the needful pressure upon the Government,—or else to ask the advice and help in some personal matter which were never refused. His library, as has been said, was like the office of a Minister, a constant stream of persons succeeding one another until it was time for him to go to the committee.

"The committee lasted from twelve to four, and during that time he was unable to relax his attention for a moment, until the brain grew so wearied with the continued strain, that during the last quarter of an hour he could often hardly keep himself from dropping asleep from sheer exhaustion. The strain on his attention was probably the greater because the inquiry turned so much on scientific and engineering points which were not

familiar to him, but which, as one of the leading counsel told me, 'he insisted on thoroughly understanding;' and, on the other hand, Mr. Loring says, 'To illustrate the closeness of the attention which the committee required of him, I would mention that on the frequent occasions on which I had to see him at the committee room, even if it were only to hand him a note, or say a dozen words to him, counsel would invariably stop in their address or stop the witness in his evidence—until they considered that the chairman could give his full attention to their words.'

"When the committee ended at four o'clock, his refreshment was usually a game of whist at the club, and then came the evening at the House, and the late sitting.

"But he seemed at the time to bear the strain without suffering, and finished with a long day of vigorous work over the arrears of his correspondence. 'We started by the evening boat on August 9th, on our journey to Baden,' writes his daughter. 'He and Mr. Loring were working tremendously hard all day, sorting papers and writing letters. When I went in about five o'clock, to take them some tea, the floor was so strewn with letters that I stopped to count them, and father told me triumphantly that he had not one unanswered letter left.' He only finished his work about half an hour before we went to the station, and I remember how vigorous and buoyant

he seemed as we set off. But this did not last long: it was as if he began to flag directly the tension of work was relaxed, and before we got to Baden he had become very languid and tired. I was not, however, uneasy at first; thinking it was only the reaction of fatigue which almost always followed the end of a session, and that a few days' rest was all he needed.

"Just after our arrival at Baden, he was shocked and saddened by the news of the sudden death of his old friend, Lord Houghton. 'Your brother,' he wrote to Lady Galway, 'was one of my oldest friends, and there are few men on whose friendship I more absolutely relied. He was very kind to me before I was known or cared about. I had the highest reliance on his insight and knowledge of men, and therefore on his political forecasts, as well as the greatest pleasure in his wit and genius. . . . I believe you were with him at the last; if so, that must, dear Lady Galway, be a great comfort to yourself.

"'Yours most truly,

"'W. E. FORSTER.'

"During the first week of our stay at Baden, he took several walks, and we made excursions to the various sights in the neighbourhood; but he continued languid and depressed, and about a week after our arrival he was attacked by a bad shivering fit, and we had to call in a doctor. His first view

of the case was that he was suffering from overwork and exhaustion of nervous energy, and he told my husband that he must have a long and complete rest, and that he would not be fit to stand the toil of the autumn elections. I think we considered this at the time a needlessly alarming view, little knowing what was before us. But the strange languor and depression continued, with frequent shiverings, and the remedies tried seemed to do no good; 'In the morning doctor tested my temperature—all right, in fact all my organs right,—I am a puzzle to him and myself,' is the entry in his diary on one of these days.

"In spite of the languor which made him feel unequal to any exertion, he dictated a letter to his election agent in Bradford about arrangements for the coming election, and wrote a letter to Sir George Bowen on Imperial Federation—

"*To* SIR GEORGE BOWEN.

"'Hotel Holland, Baden-Baden, Germany.

"'MY DEAR SIR GEORGE BOWEN,

"'I must again thank you for your letters, and especially for the copies of the reprint of your most interesting letter of May 15, valuable as it is both for its suggestions, and for the weight of your unmatched experience. I had been intending to go to Canada this autumn, in response to an invitation from the Canadian Branch of our Federation League, but Mrs. Forster is so far from well—

knocked up by London and rheumatism — that I have had to bring her here for the waters.

"'Our Federation movement is gaining great strength—the idea possesses men's minds; but we might throw it back greatly by any premature plan, and I am very anxious to find out the real views and wishes of leading colonists. My own impression is that, at first, at any rate, we had better aim at concert among the Governments rather than at an Imperial Parliament. Thanks to steam and telegraph, time and space no longer make such concert very difficult; but distance does prevent a member from being fully in touch with his constituents.

"'We must remember that in order to realize Federation, we only want (1) an organization for common defence and (2) a common foreign policy. Practically great steps have been recently made, not merely as regards defence—thanks to Australian aid—but, as regards foreign affairs. I do not believe that any Colonial Secretary will in the future venture to disregard any large self-governing colony in negotiating with any foreign Government in matters affecting such colony; and the interests and defence of our settlements, such as Hong Kong and Singapore, will I believe be much more considered in future.

"'Believe me to remain

"'Yours very sincerely,

"'W. E. FORSTER.'

"One day we drove up to the Fremersberg, and he enjoyed one of those wide panoramic views of which he was so fond—ascending, I remember, though with slow and languid steps, to the highest point of the tower, and all his old interest and pleasure returning as he pointed out the distant objects. 'We drove up to the Fremersberg Thurm —a grand view—Strasburg Cathedral quite clear,' he notes in his diary for August 19th.

"But the sense of illness increased, and as he seemed to be gaining nothing at Baden he decided to return home. 'The last thing I remember particularly about him at Baden,' writes his daughter, 'is his going to the Glarus workshop, and choosing out with great care a collar for me, and aprons for Flo and Edith and Mary,—the end of his many presents to us all.'

"By August 31st we were all settled at home again, and it was a comfort to find ourselves there; but the shadows of illness still deepened, though it was not till a few days after our return to Eccleston Square that he was quite confined to bed. Dr. Wilson Fox was then called in, and he insisted on our having a trained night-nurse. The doctors were perplexed to account for his great weakness, and for the continuance of fever, which never ran high, but could not be subdued; and they were disposed to believe that he had contracted a malarial fever at Baden. He seemed to have no inquisitiveness himself about the causes

of his illness; indeed, from the beginning to the end, it was strange to observe how little it occupied his thoughts, and how little he cared to talk about it, beyond just answering the doctor's questions. At this period he had not the least doubt that he should get well, and his only anxiety was that it should be in time for the elections. On this point his anxiety was incessant, and he continually questioned the doctors as to their opinion on it. But no words can describe the unvarying patience and sweetness of mood with which he met all the trials of illness, and the sense of utter weakness—most trying to him of all. No one ever heard one word of impatience or complaint fall from his lips, or saw one failure in his constant gentleness and consideration to all around him. The 'Recollections' which our daughter Frances wrote for me afterwards, and from which I have already quoted, give an outline of this period.

"'On Saturday, September 3rd, I was to go down to Cobham for a night. He said something laughingly about my readiness to go and desert you. On my return he gave me some playful lines he had afterwards written, altogether withdrawing the charge. . . .

"'On Monday, September 7th, Dr. Wilson Fox was called in, and he next day insisted on our having a trained night-nurse. This week seemed to mark a fresh stage in the illness. At this time his days were constantly occupied; he read the

papers a great deal, but spoke little about public affairs. He read endlessly to himself, going through all the Waverley Novels and other old friends,—Scott's Poems, and stores of favourite ballad poetry. About eleven or twelve o'clock his secretary came to his bedside, and, when he was at all equal to it, they went through the morning's letters together, and he dictated or directed the answers. I don't think that in this month (September) he had actually put into words that he would not be able to fight his election himself; but I think, as day after day passed, he began to feel it less likely. He used sometimes to say, "The doctors are always saying I am better, but I never get well;" but he never expressed any regret at not being able to take part in things; he seemed to have settled with himself not to speak of it. Once or twice I heard him say that he believed he could make a single speech if necessary, but that he could not follow it up.'

"He was not able to see many of his friends, but he was touched and pleased by the warm sympathy which his illness called forth, and deeply felt the kindness and interest manifested by the Queen, who sent constant inquiries. Lady Ely wrote, asking for a report for her Majesty,—'The Queen has telegraphed to me, she is so anxious to hear about Mr. Forster, and would like Dr. Wilson Fox to write to her about him,—she has such a regard for him, and also feels so much for your

anxiety. Can you ask Dr. Fox to do so when you see him to-morrow?' . . . After this time, by the Queen's desire, Dr. Fox sent her full daily bulletins of his patient until there seemed to be a change for the better in his condition.

"It would indeed be difficult to exaggerate the interest and anxiety with which the alternations of his long illness were watched by people of all classes, or the striking evidence afforded, in the numberless letters received from both friends and strangers, of the feelings of affection and trust which his public life had inspired. One correspondent writes, 'Your portrait looks down upon me from my study wall as I write, and it has the place of highest honour. It would comfort you in your affliction if you could know how much you are thought of by thousands of whom you know as little personally as you know of me.' Another writes to me, 'He is one of the few men whose active services are of the highest consequence to his country. Whatever Providence may ordain, the past contains a noble record of public work.' 'I do trust that he is now mending,' writes one who loved him with the loyalty of those who had worked under him, 'and that the daily report will every day become more favourable. Everywhere that I have been there has been great anxiety felt for him, for the people who do not know him have such a respect for him, and those who do cannot but love him.' 'I have been watching,'

says a comparative stranger, 'as tens of thousands of your countrymen have been watching, with great interest and thankfulness, such accounts as have appeared of your gradual progress towards recovery,—the country was never in greater need of you and of men like you.'

"'The country was never in greater need of you and of men like you;'—that was the keynote in all the expressions of regret and hope.

"My husband's own thoughts at this time often turned to Lord Shaftesbury, who was nearing the close of his life at Folkestone, and he was very anxious that I should write to express his sympathy with him in his illness, and his wish that, if well enough to receive a message, Lord Shaftesbury might be told how much he felt himself to have owed to his example in his public life. He dictated the message to me, and it was a pleasure to him to hear that it had been read to Lord Shaftesbury.

"Towards the end of September there was some improvement in my husband's health; he was allowed to be carried downstairs daily for a few hours, and on the 6th of October we went to Norwood, in the hope that the fresher air might invigorate him. But the weather was cold and bad, and although at first we tried to hope that the change was answering, he really gained nothing, and at the end of a fortnight we returned to London.

"In a letter which I wrote from Norwood about my husband's health, I said, 'In spite of occasional disappointing drawbacks, he hopes to be well enough to take part in public matters next month.' On looking back, it is difficult to see how we could have been so sanguine, but the doctors had not yet pronounced it impossible that he could take an active part in the election at Bradford, and he was still hoping against hope to do so. Writing to Mr. Killick from Norwood, he says, 'It is a relief to me to find I need not have St. George's Hall, and I suppose, if neither of the other candidates do so, I may fairly content myself with the Mechanics' Institute. It may make all the difference, as speech in the Hall means a constant strain. . . . As regards myself, I have not made much progress yet, but I do not despair. I think I shall return to London to-morrow, for I am hardly able to take advantage of this place yet.'

"In notes which I wrote from time to time, I find the following about this date:—

"'*September* 23*rd*.—I said to him how much I had admired the way in which he had been able to put aside political matters, and had not let them worry him. He assented that he had not been worried by them; "but," he said, "I think things over." His nights throughout his illness were very bad, but he often said that he had got accustomed to lying awake, and did not now mind it,

and that in the long wakeful hours "he thought things over," especially the Irish problems, which never seemed far from his thoughts—reviewing them, and trying to look at them afresh.

"'Now and then he would talk with his wonted animation. He said one day that he foresaw another crusade to make all schools secular; "but," —with the greatest energy,—"I shall drive them out of that in the House." (*September* 30*th*) He told me, when I went in this morning, that he had had a bad night. "But how little suffering I have had in this illness! it has been *nothing at all*, compared with many." Then, speaking of a member of our family who was ill, "Give Mary my dear love, and tell her how deeply I feel for them both; give her the message from me." (*October* 3*rd*) We had been reading in the Philippians together, and after referring back to the account of Philippi in the Acts, he recurred to his voyage in the Mediterranean. "There was one morning he should never forget, the morning at Salonica; he had tried to describe it a little at Bradford;—the town lying along the slope of the hill above the sea;—our magnificent fleet at anchor;—and far away the great summit of Olympus rising." He was full of the impressions, both of that scene and of all the varied associations;—the old mythology past away, the mingled races, Mahometanism; and then the modern world,—the Western powers and England;—following out to himself the train of

thought and the perplexities suggested by the long course of change and decay, flux and reflux, in religion and in human progress.

"'*Norwood.* Of late our morning time together has been more uncertain, as he has slept much better, so that often it has been near eight o'clock when he has sent for me. Till lately, if I went in soon after seven I used to find him already reading the Bible to himself. He said to me one morning, when we were speaking of his illness, "We have had some very blessed times together," and once he said most earnestly, "I would not have been without this illness for the world."'

"He talked very seldom about his illness, and his allusions to the sense of weakness, which tried him most of all, were often expressed in a half-playful way, more touching than complaint to those who heard him. After our return from Norwood, on October 17th, Sir William Jenner was called in. I think it was for the special purpose of deciding, with Dr. Wilson Fox, whether he must finally renounce the hope of taking any personal part in the election at the end of November. I suppose the doctors cannot have had much doubt in their own minds from the first; but he so earnestly desired to go down to Bradford that they had refrained from pronouncing a verdict till the last moment possible. Sir William Jenner and Dr. Fox now pronounced that it was impossible he

could be fit to undertake such an exertion within six weeks, so he finally gave up the hope, which had evidently been becoming faint even in his own mind.

"The party organization at Bradford had made many difficulties about accepting his long-declared candidature for the Central Division, and he was in constant correspondence about it with his friend and election agent, Mr. Killick. But his state was so uncertain—(for on one day he was so ill that we had to keep back his letters, as the doctors dreaded the least excitement or effort for him, and on the next day there might be a revival, and he would dictate for an hour or two to his secretary)—that it was evidently impossible for him to carry on the discussion himself, and he recognized the necessity of leaving it in the hands of his friends. He had therefore written to Mr. Killick on October 18th.

"'DEAR MR. KILLICK,

"'As I am still an invalid and unable to come to Bradford, I think it best to say that with regard to any communication on my behalf with the Liberal Association, I desire to leave my interests in the hands of yourself and any of my friends you may wish to consult, to adopt any course which they may consider right and honourable. Provided, that in any case I go to the poll if there be a contest; and that nothing is said or done to affect my own freedom of action,

or to interfere with what I conceive to be my relation to the constituency as defined in my final address to the entire borough.

"'Yours very truly,

"'W. E. FORSTER.'

"On October 24th, the executive committee of the Bradford Liberal Association adopted Mr. Forster as their candidate, and on the following Tuesday their decision was unanimously confirmed at a general meeting of the Two Hundred. Having once made the decision, the feeling shown at these meetings by all sections of the party was thoroughly kind and generous. They saw that Mr. Forster was unable as heretofore to fight his own battles, and they did honour to themselves and to him by resolving for the time to sink all their former differences, and to see in him only the respected statesman and the old and distinguished member whose representation of Bradford had lasted through storm and calm for nearly a quarter of a century. It was a decision prompted by the generous sympathy, and carried out with the cordiality and fidelity, which are never wanting in Yorkshiremen; and it brought great relief and satisfaction to him in his sick-room;—it was a comfort to him to feel that the breach with the Two Hundred was healed.

"He now occupied himself in writing his address; and I remember how much I was troubled by the effort it cost him, and how sadly I felt that,

though firm and distinct as ever in the statement of his opinions, there was a languor in its tone very different from the ring of spirit and energy in his former addresses.

"Nearly a month had passed since our return from Norwood, and in spite of the slight improvement we had seen at first, there seemed no progress to build upon. The weather, too, was so bad in London that he could go out less and less, so the doctors advised his going to Torquay for the winter months. They would have preferred his going to the south of France, but it was quite evident that he was in no state to undertake the journey. Accordingly, on November 20th, we went down to Torquay. He bore the journey better than we had ventured to hope. 'Altogether, that arrival at the Osborne Hotel,' says his daughter in her '*Recollections*,' 'comes back to my mind rather as a bright spot, and I began to have a rush of hope that we were entering on a new and much happier stage. And, indeed, at first he was able to do much more than in London, and it did seem for a time as if he were making real progress. He drove out, and even walked a little.'

"From various points in these drives we could faintly see the yellow line of the Dorsetshire cliffs, and he would stop the carriage and strain his eyes to look across for his beloved 'Golden Cap,' and the other well-known cliffs between Bridport and Lyme, which he had climbed about in his boyhood,

and which he was never tired of pointing out to me.

"The Elections were now going on, and he was watching them with the keenest interest, keeping a list day by day of the result of each election. The prospects of his own election, of course, occupied him much. Everything was going on well at Bradford: his friends, Mr. Mundella, Sir Lyon Playfair, Mr. Cropper, and Mr. Stansfeld had gone down to speak for him, his sons were working for him, the party was united, and he received encouraging accounts of the canvass. He wrote or dictated notes almost daily to his election agent; and, as I look them over now and see the faint and trembling signatures, they attest touchingly both the feeble physical powers and the clear and active mind, watchful over all the details as of old. They show, too, the self-control—so unfailing throughout his illness—with which he resigned himself to be passive. 'Now that my address is out,' he wrote at the beginning of the election campaign, 'I feel I *must* leave the management of the contest in the hands of my friends. It is not that I wish to save myself trouble while they are all working so hard; but no one not on the spot can form a judgment as to matters of detail and management.' And he had faithfully acted on this, abstaining not only from interference, but from allowing even to himself any anxiety over the details of management. Yet

it cost him much to feel that others were working for him and he was doing nothing. 'It is dreadfully trying for him,' I wrote at this time, 'to think that others are working so hard in his cause and he is able to take no part.'

"He writes to Mr. Killick, 'The party will, as a rule, vote for me; but if there be two or three irreconcilables, I suspect we must make up our minds to do without them. What I am really anxious about is the rank and file, and *their* intentions the first two or three days' canvass ought to tell us.' . . .

"'*November 24th*, 1885.—William Hargreaves * sends me the canvass returns made up by Wards, so do not trouble to send them. I know how unreliable canvass returns generally are; but I suppose the present canvassers are much the same men as Illingworth's and mine when we coalesced against Ripley in 1880, and I cannot forget how remarkably correct they then proved. However, they are quite uncertain enough to make any relaxation of effort most unwise; and, besides, for future elections it would be a great gain to get a large majority.' . . .

"The election took place on the 29th of

* Mr. Hargreaves, the late cashier at Greenholme Mills, who had closely identified himself with the interests of his employers for more than forty years, had offered his valuable services to Mr. Forster as a volunteer clerk during the election, and worked night and day for the old friend and master to whom he was loyally devoted.

November, and he was returned by a majority of 1543 votes. It was a long day of anxious expectation for our little party at Torquay—so strangely different in its quietness and monotony from all former election days; but I do not think he felt much doubt himself about the result. The two hours of suspense, from ten o'clock until midnight, were the most trying time, and he was getting very much exhausted. 'I shall never forget,' writes his daughter, 'the sound of the footstep on the Crescent pavement, or my rushing out to meet the telegrams on the staircase. I brought in the three telegrams, and we opened them together. Then how happy we were, and how anxious he was that the messenger should be properly paid! Before we were up next morning telegrams of congratulation came pouring in. With the telegrams about the election we received one telling us of the birth of Florence's baby; and he was so happy about Flo. 'It is not often,' he said to me, 'that a man gets two such telegrams in twelve hours; but the last was the best.' Sunday, November 29th, was a very full day. There were many letters to be written, and it was near post-time before the address of thanks was finished. In looking back, this Sunday seems to me to have been our last happy, hopeful day.'

"In these days of hope he resumed his diary for a brief time.

"'*Monday, November 30th.*— . . . Went to the

club to see the returns. MacIver, the Liberal, returned. The tide seems setting for the Liberals. Letters of congratulation pouring in. . . .

"'*Wednesday, December 2nd.*—James Cropper defeated. I am more sorry for this than for any election.

"'*Thursday, December 3rd.*—Very hard day, writing letters of thanks, many of them to ward chairmen.

"'*Saturday, December 5th.*— . . . A good deal of chill all the afternoon. . . .

"'*Sunday, December 6th.*—Very good night; the best I have had. Nevertheless, depressed and worse. . . . Liberals have been gaining largely through the week—a question whether small majority will be for Liberals, or Tories and Parnellites together. I hope the last.' This is the last entry in his diary.

"Although he had gained considerably in strength since he came to Torquay, and had been able to be so much in the open air, some of the most serious features of his illness had remained substantially unchanged, and soon after these brighter days all was overclouded again. We could not tell whether he had overtasked himself in writing letters of thanks to those who had worked for him in Bradford—which he insisted on doing with his own hand—or whether he had taken a chill in the bitterly cold winds, but he evidently lost ground, and in a short time was attacked by acute inflam-

mation of the liver. This was the beginning of the end, though the end was still far off, and still unforeseen by us. After this he never was able to walk out again, but when he was able to leave his bedroom could only be wheeled into the sitting-room for a few hours. Another change was that he began to suffer, for the first time in his illness, severe pain; and he was rarely afterwards free from pain in some form, borne throughout with a courage and a sweetness which those who saw him can never forget. Three times during the following months, he had sudden attacks of such a serious kind that he was hardly expected to live through the night. They were marked by a sudden and alarming rise of temperature, with oppressed breathing and stupor, but each time they passed away rapidly, and his vigorous constitution in measure rallied from them, so that they seemed to leave him in much the same state as before. He knew well the danger he had been in on these occasions, and knew well also the uncertainty of the future; but the hope and expectation of recovery were always strong within him, and he was as little absorbed as ever with his illness.

"He occupied himself, when he could, with reading; and when he was not able to do so, listened untiringly to reading aloud. He dictated many letters, often in the midst of most severe pain; and followed public affairs closely, and with

the living interest of one who was looking forward to take part in them again, but was controlling himself to patience and submission until the time should come.

"But in this brief outline I have anticipated the progress of his illness, and must now return to the early part of December.

"Our daughter had left us immediately after the election, to spend a few days with her sister in London, and when she returned on December 10th, she found her father in a very different state from when she went away.

"On the 14th, Mr. Loring, who throughout his illness had been like a son to him in his devoted and thoughtful helpfulness, came down for a week, and they worked together every day.,

"On December 17th, the *Pall Mall* produced the outline of Mr. Gladstone's supposed Home Rule Scheme, and the Central News immediately telegraphed to him to ask him to telegraph back his views at length on the subject. He would not do this; replying, that while obliged for the opportunity offered of expressing his views on the Irish Question, he was not at present inclined to avail himself of it. This reply was interpreted in some quarters to mean that he was hesitating in his opinion; a few days later, therefore, he wrote a letter to the *Daily News*, saying explicitly that he believed a Parliament in Dublin would be fraught with danger to both England and Ireland.

It was a relief to him to feel that he had spoken out and made his position clearly understood.

"*Notes.*—'*Wednesday, December* 23*rd.* His letter appeared in the *Daily News* and *Standard.* The North letters were very late; among them was one from Mr. Gladstone congratulating him on Bradford and improved health, and mentioning having seen with pleasure a notice of a letter from him "which had seemed very wise." I took him the letters at a favourable time in the afternoon; he read them, and returned quietly to his book; but later on, though in severe pain, he dictated to me without a trace of effort or excitement a letter of sympathy to Mr. S—— of Bradford, who had met with an accident, and his reply to Mr. Gladstone.'

"'My dear Mr. Gladstone,

"'Excuse my dictating to my wife my thanks for your most kind letter, but I am kept in bed to-day. The fact is I am much stronger than I was, but my liver gives me a great deal of trouble, and just now I have rather a sharp attack of pain, which, however, I hope the doctor will get the better of in a day or two.

"'I fear your kind letter must have been written on the perusal of an incorrect letter of mine to the Central News Association, which I felt that I ought to set right in a letter to the *Daily News.*

"'This Irish matter is indeed most full of difficulties, and I wish to say that I have looked

at Home Rule with a most earnest endeavour to form an impartial judgment. I have employed hours, I may say days, in overhauling my previous views, but I cannot come to any other conclusion than the one I gave in the letter I have mentioned.

"'Believe me, my dear Mr. Gladstone, to remain "'Yours most sincerely,

"'W. E. FORSTER.'

"*Notes.*—'He was awake most of the night. When I went in about a quarter past three, I heard him half repeating poetry, half sighing, and almost groaning with the pain. . . . He was looking feverish and oppressed, but very patient. When I went in about eight o'clock I found he had slept little; however, all seemed less oppressive with morning light. As he could not see the sunrise from where he lay, we moved the pier-glass so that he saw it in that, which he enjoyed. He said he thought the pain was "rather less"—as he always will say, if he can. . . . I spoke of it being a sad Christmas for us. . . . He would not let me call it a *sad* Christmas: "It is a better Christmas than any we have had," he said; "I would not have it different for anything."'

"'It was quite early on Tuesday morning, December 29th,' writes his daughter in her '*Recollections*,' 'that he was taken so very ill, and that we were called to him. He was very feverish, and

his breathing laboured, and he seemed strangely far away from us; and, as we knelt there, we thought was he going from us then. . . . As it began to be light the breathing became more natural, and he sank into a quiet sleep. I went into the sitting-room. The sun was just rising over Torbay. The sea itself was grey and stormy, but over Berry Head was a line of golden light, and I thought of the river with the Celestial City shining beyond it.

"'When the doctors came in the morning for the second time he was much better, and in the afternoon he was quite like himself, knowing nothing of what had passed in the night. He was exceedingly anxious to get his election returns signed, and Mr. Speir came in and witnessed them. We could not keep the papers from him with their paragraphs about his danger, and, besides, we had sent for Edward, and Robin and Flo were coming, so gradually he learnt how ill he had been in the night. He was very much interested, and questioned the nurse and us very closely, only as calmly as if it had been about some one else's illness.

"'On December 31st we were made anxious by his extreme wakefulness all the morning, and we wanted him very much to be still and try and get a little sleep. At last Edward read him to sleep, and I went in and took Edward's place. By-and-by he woke, and asked what day it was. I told him New Year's Eve. After a time he began to

pray out loud. There was something about his not being moved either "by the sharpness of pain or by the fear of death," but even directly afterwards I could not recall the exact words, nothing but the solemn general impression. After a pause, he said, "I have tried to serve my country." Almost directly afterwards we were interrupted, and he sent for Edward again, and asked him what he meant to do about his boys. He was pleased about Del's being meant for a sailor, and said, "If I do not get better, you must go to Lord George Hamilton, or, if our people are in, to Sir Thomas Brassey, and tell him it was my dying wish that Del should have a nomination." It was at this time, too, that he told Edward of his wish to be buried at Burley.'

"*Notes.*—'I went into his room at five o'clock this morning, and found him awake; he had had a wakeful night. I asked if I should repeat some hymns to soothe him to sleep; he said he was going to ask me. After I had repeated several, he asked me to kneel down. I knelt close beside him, and he began to pray in a trembling solemn voice, like one speaking his real thoughts to One unseen. The whole burden and heart of it was, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief." I can only put down fragments. . . . Towards the end he prayed, "Whether Thou art pleased to raise me up and enable me to serve my country again, or whether my work in Parliament is to be closed, help me to try and serve my

country, or help me to bear it." . . . All through there was the same solemn trembling earnestness of the tones, the grave simple language perfectly free from excitement, or from being hurried by emotion into a single unreal word—the strong reason and the humble spirit both laid open before the God to whom he spoke, and the burden still was "Lead me, and give me light."

"'He had an all but sleepless night. I went in several times, helping to arrange his pillows, etc., as he was very uneasy and could not be made comfortable by any means. Soon after eight he asked me to read "one of those grand hymns about the glories of God in His works." I proposed the 104th Psalm, but he took the Bible, and turned over the Psalms to the 147th and 148th, which we read. Ever since his attack, letters and telegrams of inquiry had come pouring in. "I was with him about one o'clock, reading letters full of affection and sorrow and anxiety for him. He was touched and pleased, and, when I had done, he said, 'I did not know people cared about me so much.'"

"'He had a good deal of quiet sleep in the night without opiates. When I went into his room he seemed much refreshed. I asked if I should repeat one or two of the hymns I knew he liked, instead of reading a Psalm, and began to repeat "God moves in a mysterious way." He said he would try to say it, and he repeated it slowly in

his beautiful deep voice. . . . Then he repeated, "This world I deem," * which he had been too ill to do since his last attack; then murmured in parts, "Ye are indeed our pillar fires." †

"'*January 5th.*—He was very low this morning. I reminded him of his having said at Norwood that we had had some very blessed times together. "And so we have,—worth all the illness."

"'On the evening of January 6th he sat up in his chair again, for the first time since December 22nd.'

"During this time of severe pain and entire helplessness, his courage and patience were unfailing. My sister, Miss Arnold, who had been with us during most of that time, wrote afterwards, 'Never shall I forget his uncomplaining sweetness as he lay hour after hour at Torquay, unable to move even from side to side because of the pain. I am thankful he has had some better nights since.' During this depth of illness he had been obliged to give up reading to himself, but he liked to be constantly read to. One of our books was the last volume of Macaulay's History, which always chained his interest.

* A hymn by Whytehead, which had always been a great favourite of his.

† From a poem by Henry Vaughan, beginning "Joy of my life, while left me here and still my Love!" He was a great admirer of Henry Vaughan, and would often read or repeat his poems as his contribution to the "Sunday evening repeatings" in old days at Fox How.

"His daughter mentions that, on January 11th, 'Dr. Clay came over again from Plymouth in consultation with Dr. Huxley. The moment he was gone, we heard father asking for some one to read to him—he asked not a single question, made no allusion to the doctors' visit, but plunged straight into Macaulay.'

"*Notes, continued.*—'*Friday, January 8th.* My beloved husband had a very sleepless night. In the early morning he asked for me. . . . He soon began to repeat in his slow deep tones the Epiphany hymn of Northrepps Cottage, "Star of the East, whose beacon light," going back on the lines again and again if he was not sure he was correct. Immediately afterwards, in a low but steady voice, he began to pray for Ireland and for this country with great earnestness and fulness.

"'*January 12th.*—To-day he has been much better, talking a good deal with his old humorous turns. . . . He asked what literary resources we had, and Frances enumerated our books. We talked of Sir Henry Taylor's autobiography, and he gave recollections of him at the Colonial Office, and how they were opposed to each other about Governor Eyre. Then about Governor Storks, and his famous "Perfect tranquillity reigns," and other anecdotes about him. Apropos of chivalrous devotion to women, he quoted "The bloody vest," to illustrate the difference between true and false chivalry. . . . He talked with interest of what the

position of women really was in the Middle Ages. . . . Altogether he seemed more at ease physically, and more like himself in conversation than he had been for a long time. Afterwards he had the London papers, and read them to himself, quite exclaiming with interest at one or two things about Parliamentary changes.

"'Just before his lunch he said he would have the blind drawn up. He looked across at the Brixham shore, and said: "That forbidden land! When we came down here I thought I should soon be well enough to walk from Brixham to Berry Head." There was scarcely even sadness in his voice as he spoke of his often disappointed hopes.

"'This morning I was reading in St. Luke. I read part of the tenth chapter, and stopped at the parable of the Good Samaritan. He asked me to read it. To how very many, helpless and unfortunate, and often of little desert, has my dearest husband been a good Samaritan,—looking to nothing but their need, perfectly unweariable in helping them again and again, and yet again—however hopeless the task.

"'*January 15th.*—This afternoon I read him a letter I had had from Mr. Tuke, in which he said that he thought Mr. Forster would like to know that in the Friends' Meeting for Sufferings his recovery had been earnestly prayed for. My beloved husband was greatly moved. "The Church of my fathers has not forgotten me!" he said,

bursting into tears. He did not recover his usual calmness for some time.'

"On the 13th, our son was obliged to return home, and his father consulted him whether he ought to resign his seat. Edward satisfied him that it would be only a matter of form if he did offer his resignation, for that his constituents would certainly not accept it. He agreed to do nothing, at least till the Easter recess, and after this never spoke of the matter again. His allusion to the Easter recess in this conversation showed the indomitable hopefulness about his final recovery, which the doctors had all along considered one of the best of his chances of struggling through. His hope and vital energy seemed always to battle against the pressure of disease, and in spite of years of hard and exciting work, his constitution was still so strong that those who watched him could hardly help sharing his hopefulness.

"The month went on, amid frequent alterations in his state. Sometimes he was able to be wheeled into the sitting-room for a few hours, but often he was only able to sit up for an hour in his bedroom. He did not often talk of the politics of the hour, but even when suffering most from pain and languor, he continued to follow public events with close interest, especially the many rumours about Mr. Gladstone's expected declaration for Home Rule. In a letter dictated to Mr. Goschen, on January 15th, he says:—

"'I believe it will be impossible for me to take part in any debate, but I have followed the Irish news with intense interest, and it is one of the things one has to try to bear patiently to be forced to be quiet during this crisis.' After speaking of the rumours respecting Mr. Gladstone's policy, he continues, 'Let me tell you, privately, what seems to me, as an old Irish administrator, our weak point; there will be some, though only a few, cases of hard evictions. I had some such cases, and then I comforted myself with the belief that the Land Act would stop them: but we must consider how they can be stopped under present circumstances.'

"A few weeks later on, February 11th, he wrote again to Mr. Goschen: 'I am most glad to get your letter, and should be still more glad if I could get full talk with you. Had I been in the House, I should have been inclined to speak after Gladstone in the debate on the Address, strongly protesting against reticence on his part, especially in its unfairness to the police, who are left in ignorance as to who their masters will be.

"'The case, however, now is different. Arguing against Home Rule without knowing his plan is like arguing for an abstract resolution, and will not convince the Gladstonites. Our chance of getting back any of them in Parliament or the country depends on our being able to expose the plan itself. My notion, then, would be a strong protest

against delay on the first debate, if he does not—as I suppose he will not—disclose his Irish plan on the first declaration of his general policy; but to postpone actual war, until we get the plan itself.'

"Among the letters which gave him pleasure at this time were some telling him of the release of a young man who had been imprisoned in Australia for a crime of which there was reason to believe he was innocent. Ever since his case was brought to my husband's knowledge, several years ago, he had been unwearied in his efforts to obtain his release, and now rejoiced to hear that his innocence had been at last proved, and that he had returned home. He wrote to the young man in reply to a grateful letter from him:—

"'Torquay, January 22nd.

"'DEAR ——,

"'I have been so ill that I have not felt myself able earlier to answer your note. I am very glad that you have been restored to your parents, and I am still more glad, if possible, that your innocence has been publicly proved.

"'Your experience has been a very bitter one, but it has not been altogether a loss. It must have called out all the manliness in your character, and, by God's help, and under His guidance, you may become an honour and comfort to your parents,

doing good to others, and striving with good hope to be successful in working for yourself.

"'May this be your future, is the earnest hope of your sincere friend,

"'W. E. FORSTER.'

"The mother wrote to me: 'I feel towards him gratitude and love too deep for words. May God grant him a return to health; his life is a noble one—doing good to all, and *to mine*.'

"Whenever he was well enough he enjoyed seeing the friends who occasionally came to Torquay; and our kind neighbours, Mr. and Mrs. Speir and Canon Scott Holland, used to let us send word to them whenever we thought a visitor would be cheering for him, so that they could come in at the right moment. In a letter, written after his death, Canon Scott Holland recalls the impression made upon him in these visits. After speaking of 'those few short interviews, which had been their whole acquaintance,' he says: 'And now every reference to him, every record of him, is changed from what it would have been, from my clear memory of that sick-room at Torquay, and of those honest and pure grey-blue eyes, and of that dignified, honourable kindliness which no sickness could disfigure or discredit. It was a sight full of tenderness and of worth, and I shall always treasure it among my most valued and sacred memories.'

"The account of our stay at Torquay may be concluded by a few extracts from the '*Recollections*' addressed to me, which have been already frequently quoted.

"'On January 26th, Edith came to us for a month with baby. Do you not remember how little Trev used to lie kicking and smiling on the bed, or sometimes sitting up close beside him with his baby hands entwined round his grandfather's long thin fingers? . . . When people sent him flowers now, he was so courteous in expressing his pleasure and in his care to have them always in his sight. Canon Bell sent him some snowdrops and violets, and he dictated such a pretty note of thanks, saying how the sight of them had recalled his rides in childhood through the Dorsetshire lanes in search of wild flowers.

"'On February 2nd, Sir William Jenner came down for the night to see him, and to give us an opinion as to the safety of his being moved to London. He spoke much more hopefully than the other doctors, and when he went away he left me feeling more cheered than I had been for months past; but it was only for a few days.

"'On February 9th, Mr. MacIver called, and father was much interested in all he had to say about Burmah. It had been a decidedly good day; but at night there was another of those attacks, such as he had had in December. It was terribly alarming, and yet I don't think that through it

all he ever gave me the impression of being so hopelessly ill, or so far away out of our reach. Towards morning the fever subsided, and he fell into a natural sleep. . . . All the next day he was quite brilliant in his talk about all manner of things. How he laughed over Edith's and my troubles in the night with the baby and the alarum, and how he entered into "Pepys's Diary." The change was so sudden and unnatural that it half frightened us, and yet it was difficult not to feel a thrill of hope. The next day, February 11th, he had fallen back into his old languid state. . . . You were very anxious now that we should get back to London, as Sir William Jenner had sanctioned the journey. I don't think he wished it strongly himself; but he quite acquiesced in the move, and took an interest in all the preparations. On February 25th, we left Torquay, and got back safely to London. He bore the journey better than we had dared to hope. He was pleased and encouraged at this, and by the thoughtful way in which all had been planned, and by the kindness and courtesy of all the railway officials; and he was most anxious that every one concerned should get his due measure of thanks. Just when we got back to London we heard of the subscription that was being raised in the Reform Club for a picture of him. This pleased him very much. We fell back into very much the same ways as before we went to Torquay. . . . Mr. Loring came up to

his room in the morning, and he got through some work with him. In the afternoon he generally had visitors. . . . Day after day, now, he seemed to remain at much the same stage, sometimes seeming brighter, and sometimes more languid; but not making any real progress.'

"There is very little more to be told, but a few more passages from the notes may still be given. '*March 1st*, 80, *Eccleston Square*.—To-day he saw Mr. Tuke, who talked about emigration for the unemployed, and the large scale on which he thought this relief might be needed for the future. W. talked more than usual. Evidently from his grasp of the whole difficulty, he must have been turning it over in his mind. He spoke of the Meeting for Sufferings offering prayer for him, and hoped they knew how deeply he had felt it.' . . .

"My sister, Mrs. Cropper, and her husband, had come in on Sunday afternoon. 'He wanted them to come up to his bedroom, and said, if they did not mind it, he should like us to have the service together. We read together the Psalms and lessons, and some collects. At the verse "He gave their land to be an heritage," etc., W. said, "How many cruel and wicked robberies have been justified by that verse!"'

"Ireland was still to have some of his last thoughts. 'On March 13th,' writes his daughter, 'I remember seeing him talking to Lord Selborne. He was sitting in his arm-chair in his bedroom.

The conversation was about Ireland, and when I went in, he was talking with so much of his old force and vigour that it startled me; and I remember thinking that no one who saw him at that moment would guess how ill he was.'

"On the 17th, his daughter, Mrs. O'Brien, sent him, as she had been used to do, a bunch of shamrock for St. Patrick's Day. He was too ill in the morning to notice it; but when I took it to him later, he was greatly pleased, and had it placed by his bedside. His friend Mr. Tuke had gone over to Ireland to distribute relief in the shape of food and seed potatoes in the most distressed districts. Such a work recalled to my husband the similar work in which, as a young man, he and Mr. Tuke had been engaged in the same districts in the terrible famine years, and he was anxious about some of the islands he had visited then, and where he knew the poverty now to be specially grievous. On March 24th, I wrote for him to Mr. Tuke, sending a subscription, with a request that it might, if possible, be applied to the relief of Boffin, one of the poorest and most inaccessible of the islands. It was his last work for Ireland, and I am not sure that he was ever able to hear Mr. Tuke's letter in reply, telling him that food had been already sent.

"*Notes.*—'*March 27th.* Last Sunday afternoon, rather late, when he seemed tired and low, I asked him if he would read me some of Matt's poetry.

He brightened up, said he should like it, and read his favourite poem, "The Future," and then "The Forsaken Merman." All through his illness nothing seemed more often to cheer him if he was low or weary than to read or repeat poetry, and the quantity that he knew by heart used to astonish me—the old stores of his youth coming back to his memory. He beguiled many sleepless hours of the night by repeating pages of "Marmion" or the "Lay," fragments of old ballads, etc. His fondness for some of Henry Vaughan's poems has already been mentioned; these and a number of the old well-known hymns, which had doubtless been favourites at Northrepps and the Cottage, he used often to repeat. At Torquay he used frequently to read poetry to us. One day, I remember, when he was very unequal to the exertion, he read through Wordsworth's "Ode to Immortality," enjoying it so much that he would not give it up.'

"The last week of March is marked in my notes as 'a good week' with him, but it was the last gleam. 'On Tuesday, the 23rd, Sir William Jenner came, and found the nervous vitality much higher than he had seen it at all. On Wednesday, he went out in a bath chair—the first time for three months that he had breathed the air. He was eager for it and much enjoyed it, and was able to see several people that afternoon, and was not tired. It was altogether a good week with him;

he talked more readily and brightly, so like himself—often in half-playful ways. Bevan Braithwaite came by invitation about half-past five on Sunday evening. He prayed with us.'

"*F.'s Recollections.*—'*April 2nd.* He seemed really better. The coachman had just brought the horses up from Wharfeside, and you and he went for a drive, which he enjoyed. On coming in, he stopped in the hall before he was carried upstairs, and turned round to call out a message of thanks to Morris for having got ready so quickly. After lunch he wrote some letters himself, and in the afternoon talked for some time with interest to Mrs. Jeune, not the least as if he were tired. After he had gone to bed I read to him, and when I went back to him after dinner he asked me to read again, and we went on till bedtime.'

"*Notes.*—'The last thing, I went to him to have our prayer together. I said the collect for "pardon and peace;" . . . the last word I heard from him till I was called to him in the morning was his grave and earnest "Amen." He seemed quiet in his room all night. I looked in before six, but did not go in, as I was not quite sure from his breathing that he was asleep.'

"*F.'s Recollections.*—'*April 3rd.* At half-past eight, another attack like the Torquay ones came on. All that day the fever lasted; he was not exactly unconscious, but he lay speaking little and taking very little notice. On Sunday morning, April 4th,

we told him that Edward had come. He was pleased, and was anxious for him to come upstairs at once. . . . Oakeley came to him about one o'clock, and said, taking his hand, "My beloved father." He knew him.

"'In the afternoon there was more pain, and he wandered a good deal. Towards evening he was very restless. . . . The fever continued all night. Early on Monday morning (April 5th) you came to me, and told me it was just the same. . . . We went back to his room. We could not tell how far he was conscious, but how emphatically he assented when once you asked him if he knew that it was his wife's arm that was supporting him. The quick and painful breathing continued for several hours, until a few minutes before the end. Then the breaths came slower and softer, till the last was hardly a sigh, and slowly and gently he passed away out of our reach.'"

CHAPTER XIII.

CONCLUSION.

Mr. Forster's death touched the public keenly. That he should have died at such a time, when a great crisis in our national history had been reached, and when a mighty change was coming over the minds of a large section of the English people on the subject of our policy with regard to Ireland, seemed to intensify the mourning for his loss. It was indeed strange that he who had so long insisted, almost alone among English politicians of the first rank, upon the right of independent judgment in political affairs, upon the duty of subordinating even party loyalty to personal conviction, should have been removed at the very moment when those views suddenly became widely and generally popular. Yet he cannot be accounted unhappy in the moment of his death. The public sympathy had been deeply stirred by his long illness, and by his inability to take any personal part in the general election. Residents in Bradford and Leeds can bear witness to the fact that whilst the contest was being fought out in the

Central Division of the former town, one question which eclipsed all others in its interest was that of Mr. Forster's probable fate at the ballot. On the Saturday night, described in the previous chapter, on which the election for Central Bradford was decided, there was not a spot in Yorkshire where politicians congregated, where men did not wait with breathless anxiety for the news; and when it came, and it was found that Mr. Forster, absent and ill, had triumphed over the combined forces of Toryism and Parnellism, the shouts of exultation which were raised and the emotion which was displayed, showed how strong was the feeling of affection which he had inspired in the hearts of his neighbours, and how profound had been their anxiety lest a dishonouring blow might be struck at him whilst he lay helpless on a sick-bed.

The feeling which was shown to so marked a degree in Yorkshire at the time of the Bradford election, extended more or less throughout the country. Generous Englishmen of every party, including men to whom he had been opposed in politics throughout his life, were moved by the inability of one who had so long been ever in the front of the fight, to take even the slightest part in a contest which interested him so deeply. His death, which put an end to hopes widely entertained by the outside world of his speedy return to public life, came as a shock upon the nation. From every quarter tributes of honour and respect

were paid to his memory. The comments of the press upon his career were marked by an ample recognition of the strength and purity of his character, of his commanding abilities, his inexhaustible energy and his deep-rooted patriotism. It was not in England only that this testimony was borne. The leading part which he had taken in connection with the great question of the federation of the empire had given him a new title to honour and esteem in the colonies, and from every quarter of the world, wherever the British flag flies, came expressions of sorrow at his death, and acknowledgments of the greatness of the loss which had fallen upon the empire.

The private utterances of sympathy and grief which reached his wife and family came literally from every class in the nation, and were marked by an unmistakable warmth and genuineness of feeling. One only can be quoted here. The Queen wrote to Mrs. Forster as follows:—

"Windsor Castle, April 7th, 1886.

"DEAR MRS. FORSTER,

"I purposely delayed writing at once to you, not wishing to intrude on your overwhelming grief for the loss of such a husband, so good and so devoted, fearing to add to the weight of your affliction; but to-day I trust I may venture to express not only the deep sympathy I feel for you, but also the true and sincere concern I feel at the

loss of one for whom I had the greatest regard and respect, and who served his Queen and country bravely, truly, and loyally. We can ill afford to lose so honest, so unselfish and courageous a statesman as he was, in these days, and his public loss is very great.

"But I ought not to speak of such feelings when I think of you, from whom the light and joy of your life has been taken. Still I think that the appreciation of those we have lost by others, and by the sovereign he served so well, is soothing to the bleeding heart.

"My daughter Beatrice feels deeply for you, and shares my sorrow at dear Mr. Forster's loss. Pray express my sympathy to your children; and praying that God may give you peace and strength to bear up,

"Believe me, always,

"Yours very sincerely,

"VICTORIA R. AND I."

A suggestion in the *Times* that a funeral service should be held in Westminster Abbey was immediately adopted. The service was held on Friday, April 9th, and was attended by a vast throng of his old political associates, members of the public services, representatives of the colonies, personal friends, and the general public. The chiefs of both political parties met in the abbey to mourn the loss of one who had not merely written his

name in the history of his country, but secured a place in the hearts of his contemporaries. Imposing as the abbey service was, however, it could not vie with the scene which was witnessed on the following day, Saturday, April 10th, when Forster's body was laid to rest in the burial-ground at Burley, hard by the home he had loved so passionately, and the little community which had learned to trust him as a friend long before the world had heard of him as a statesman. It was a wild winter's day, and the beautiful Wharfe valley wore an aspect of desolation that harmonized well with the thoughts of the mourners. Thousands of men and women from Bradford, Leeds, and the neighbouring towns, where his name had so long been as a household word, joined the people of Burley and the other villages of Wharfedale in following him to the grave. No such demonstration of public grief had ever before been witnessed in the valley; and those who mingled with that throng of mourners quickly learned that it was not the politician, but the man, who filled the thoughts of all. Yesterday, with the stately service at Westminster, had been for the statesman: to-day, with its simple Quaker funeral in the hillside burial-ground, witnessed the last farewell to the friend and neighbour, who had risen high in the councils of the State, but whose heart had remained unaffected by all the changes of fortune; who had never varied in his affection

for the friends of his youth, or in his bearing towards the humblest of those among whom his lot was cast; whose temper had not been soured by trials, nor his sympathies narrowed by the growth of years; whose spirit had remained young whilst his head grew grey; and the horizon of whose mental vision had seemed ever to grow wider and brighter as he drew nearer to the end of life. If heartfelt love and sorrow furnish the highest tribute to the dead, then indeed may Mr. Forster's friends feel that he was honoured above most.

Many marks of the public regard for his labours have been given since his death. At Bradford and in London, his memory is to be perpetuated by statues erected in public places; whilst in Westminster Abbey a medallion, placed close to the monument of his uncle, Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, with whom his first entrance upon public work is associated, secures for his name a place in our noblest national shrine. But if any visible and tangible memorial of the life of such a man as Mr. Forster were needed to preserve his name from oblivion, it would be found, not in carven marble or moulded bronze, but in the school-houses which, rising in every town and village in the land he loved so well, bear witness to the success of the Education Act, of which he was the author, and in which it was his happy lot to see the realization of the cherished aspirations of his youth.

"Half the people in the village want to die that they may be buried there," were the words spoken by one of Forster's humble village friends immediately after his death, in reference to the hillside burial-ground where he is laid; and beside this outburst of genuine feeling on the part of those who knew him best, and who judged him for what he was and what he did, it would be superfluous to say more of the place which he had won in the hearts of those around him.

The following lines, touchingly suggestive of the links by which Forster's labours and his father's were bound together, appeared immediately after his death in *The Friend*:—

THE TWO FUNERALS.

WILLIAM FORSTER *and* W. E. FORSTER.
(*Obit.* 27 i., 1854.) (*Obit.* 5 iv., 1886.)

In Tennessee, across the wide Atlantic,
There rests the clay
Of one who bore the image of his Master—
Long passed away.

A lonely grave, with few to stand beside it
To shed a tear,
Although to the oppressed of many a nation
His name was dear.

Beneath that massive form a heart was bleeding
For all earth's woe,
Till the strained tension burst the clay-built dwelling
And laid it low.

But angels, hovering o'er on snow-white pinions,
Their loved to greet,
Bore the freed soul with joyful hallelujahs
To Christ's own feet.

* * * * * *

In England's stately, world-renowned Walhalla,
A mournful train
Of great and noble meet, while—slowly—slowly—
A dirge-like strain—

A funeral anthem in the grand old Abbey,
Far-off, yet near,
Floats on the air. Hush! stand ye all uncovered,—
Room for the bier!

Silence—deep silence—for the dead is coming
In deathly state.
Ah! what is *life?* Before that kingly sceptre
Earth's proudest wait.

Yet speak those floral wreaths of resurrection—
Not born to die;
The mortal perishes, but the immortal
Mounts up on high.

The fixed heroic aim, the will unswerving,
True to the line,
Not earth-born, but a glorious emanation
Of the divine.

These cannot pass away, and still thou livest
Among thy peers,
Thy name a banner-cry to all the noble
Through coming years.

* * * * * *

"Dust unto dust." Mid nature's lonely wildness
A kindred band
Around a simple grave in his own Wharfedale
In silence stand.

Make way—make way, and let the long procession
Pass on—pass on;
One of yourselves, ye toiling sons of England,
To rest has gone.

One of yourselves, your ever-honoured Master;
Yet more—your *Friend;*
Yes, mourn ye may, ye will not find his fellow
Till time shall end.

But lift your thoughts above this narrow casket,
He is not there—
Of all Eternity's untold resources
The chosen heir!

And meet it is with tears that praise should mingle;
On bended knee,
Hearts bowed with anguish raise their grateful tribute,
O Lord, to Thee;

Calling, from Time's brief span, thy servant higher,
To endless days,
Where, sire with son, in wider fields of service,
Blend work with praise.

M. E. B.

INDEX.

A

Abbott, Richard, Forster's mathematical master, i. 61
Abdul Kerim, Turkish Commander-in-Chief, ii. 129
Aberdeen, Lord, ii. 165
Aberdeen University, ii. 153–160
Achmet Kaiserley, Turkish Minister of Marine, ii. 139
Adam, W. P., Liberal whip, ii. 96, 106, 222
Adams, Charles Francis, American Minister, i. 336, 342, 347, 368; ii. 10, 12, 25, 28, 65, 87
Adderley, C. B., i. 388, 392
Afghanistan, ii. 216–218
Agrarian outrages, ii. 254, 263, 268, 289, 319, 326, 334, 354, 385, 400, 416, 438
Ahmed Vefvik, ii. 166
Aiken, Edward, at school with Forster, i. 52
Aksa, a village in Turkey, i. 405
Alabama claims, the, i. 363, 529; ii. 8–33
Albania, ii. 149
Alexander, G. W., i. 131, 190
Allen, Commanders Bird and William, i. 127
America, United States of, the elder Forster visits, i. 31; "Uncle Tom's Cabin," 289; civil war, 333, 337; American freedom a sham, 355; the Alabama claims, ii. 8–33; Forster's visit, 65–92; Land League remittances from, 348
Anti-slavery Society, ii. 105, 482
Applegarth, Mr., of the Society of Carpenters and Joiners, i. 454
Arbitration, the Geneva, ii. 22–33
Argyll, Duke of, ii. 105, 165
Arms Bill, the, ii. 301
Arnold, Dr., i. 161, 263; E. P., 372; Edward, 372; Matthew, 317; William Delafield, 267, 285, 314–316; Jane, wife of W. E. Forster, 263
Arnold-Forster, E. P., i. 138; ii. 44, 53
Arthur, Mr., and the Birmingham League, i. 541
Ashe, Dr., i. 80
Ask Lodge, i. 191
Ateliers, Club des, i. 239
Athenry, Forster at, ii. 394
Athens, i. 433
Aumale, Duc d', ii. 2
Austria, ii. 140, 148
"Autocracy of the Czars," i. 293
Azani, the Temple of Jupiter at, i. 414
Aziz Pacha, Governor of Philoppolis, ii. 129, 137

B

Backhouse, Jonathan and Hannah, i. 91, 95
Baines, Edward, i. 308, 313, 331, 350, 365, 439, 502, 553
Ball, John, i. 371, 401, 405, 425, 478
Ballinasloe, i. 189

"Ballitore, the Annals of," i. 28
Ballot Act, the, i. 530, 533; ii. 3, 5
Balmoral, i. 511
Baltimore, ii. 86
Bandurra, famine at, i. 190
Barbes, i. 231, 236, 237, 242, 243
Baring, ii. 131
Barrows Hill, i. 39
Bashi-Bazouks, the, ii. 110, 130, 134
Batak atrocities, ii. 109, 134, 144
Baxter, W. E., i. 349, 550
Bazardjik, i. 407
Beaconsfield, Lord, i. 356, 397; Household Suffrage Bill, 400; resigns, 449; unable to form an administration, 551; attacks Forster, ii. 4, 106; accepts an earldom, 109; his *recklessness*, 186, 188; speech at the Guildhall banquet, 216; resigns, 231
Beecroft, Mr., member for Leeds, i. 313
Beehive, Forster bitterly attacked in the, i. 524
Behrens, Sir Jacob, and the Education Bill, i. 482
Belfield, George III. at, i. 20
Belgrade, Forster at, ii. 118–122
Belmullet, distress in, ii. 302
Bentham, Jeremy, i. 162
Berlin treaty, the, ii. 216
Beveridge, Governor, ii. 74
Biggar, Mr. Joseph G., ii. 176, 259
Binney, Mr., and the Birmingham League, i. 541
Binns's school at Tottenham, i. 55
Birkbeck, Henry, at school with Forster, i. 61
Birkbeck, Jane, wife of Josiah Forster, i. 6
Birmingham League, the, i. 465, 471–572; ii. 40, 58, 94, 212
Bismarck, Prince, ii. 177
Black, Rev. W., i. 251, 351
Blake, Mr., ii. 380
Blanc, Louis, i. 226, 230, 244
Blanqui, M., i. 231–234, 240, 242
Bludgeon-fighting at an election, i. 93
Boffin, famine at, i. 194; ii. 559
Bolton, i. 142, 152, 204
Bosnia, ii. 122, 129, 168, 199
Boston, ii. 87
Bowen, Sir George, ii. 525
Bowring, Dr., i. 109
Boycott, Captain, ii. 265
Boycotting, ii. 252, 254, 276, 342, 369, 376, 387, 416
Bradford, i. 137; *Times*, 139; *Observer*, 146, 330; cholera, 251; Forster elected for, ii. 330; caucus, 206, 210, 219; Liberal Association, 501, 536
Bradpole, i. 24, 25, 77
Brady, the murderer, ii. 467
Brand, Henry, Liberal whip, i. 349, 352, 376, 502; ii. 2.
Brennan, Thomas, ii. 259
Bridport, i. 24
Brigandage, i. 418
Bright, John, i. 337; military preparations, 346; impracticable and un-English, 362; reform demonstrations, 392; in the Cabinet, 449; Privy Councillor, 450; Birmingham League, 526, 557; Ballot Bill, 531; on education, 554; Chancellor of the Duchy, 556; attacks Forster, 557–573; his oratory, ii. 517
British and Foreign School Society, i. 298
British Columbia, i. 391
British India Society, i. 279
"British Philanthropy and Jamaica Distress," i. 293
Broussa to Smyrna, Forster's journey from, i. 403
Brown, F., i. 279
Bruce, H. A., i. 442, 466, 474, 533, 549
Brussels, ii. 116
Buchanan, Sir Andrew, ii. 142
Bucharest, ii. 119
"Buckshot," ii. 301, 316, 331, 396, 474
Bulgarian atrocities, the, ii. 108–140
Burke, Mr., Permanent Under-Secretary, ii. 243, 260, 305, 350, 377, 458, 463
Butt, Mr., ii. 107
Buxton, Anna, i. 17–23; wife of William Forster, 24; visits Ireland, 28; Priscilla, 63; Charles, 167
Buxton, Sir Thomas Fowell, i. 14–32, 47–59, 71, 92, 98, 103–115, 126, 169; second baronet, ii. 65
Buxtons of Colne, the, i. 18, 47

Buyukderé, ii. 130
Byles, William, proprietor of the *Bradford Observer*, i. 146; ii. 43, 45, 194

C

Cahirciveen, i. 172, 177
Cairns, Lord, ii. 329, 392, 395
Caithness, Forster's visit to, i. 143
Campbell, Sir George, ii. 100
Canada, ii. 67, 85, 89, 100
Cantwell, Rev. Mr., Irish priest, ii. 360
Capital, value and power of, i. 149
Cardwell, Lord, i. 381–390, 514, 569; ii. 24, 105, 165, 171
Carey, James, the informer, ii. 431, 467–471
Carlsbad, ii. 177
Carlyle, Jane, i. 205–214, 227
Carlyle, Thomas, i. 145; "Sartor Resartus," 150; "Chartism," 155; visit from Forster, 167, 227, 244; with Forster, 206; at a Methodist meeting, 207; at a *table d'hôte*, 208; visit to Rawdon, 209–214; with Duffy and Forster in Ireland, 249; Lord George Hill, 250; his pamphlets, 268
Carnarvon, Lord, ii. 179, 185, 188, 189
Cassaba, i. 426
"Castle, the," ii. 377
Castlebar, i. 189, 249
Catechism to be excluded from schools, the, i. 498, 502, 507, 570; ii. 66
Cattle plague, i. 458, 529; ii. 2, 5
Caucus, the. *See* Birmingham League.
Cavendish, Lord Frederick, i. 516; ii. 192, 340, 368, 451–459, 469
Cetewayo, ii. 220
Chamberlain, Mr. Joseph, ii. 40, 175, 385, 410, 434, 493, 506
Chaplin, Mr., and the Disturbance Bill, ii. 244, 246
"Chartism the Peril of the Nation," i. 226
Chartists, the, i. 218–248
Chartres, Duc de, ii. 2
Chatel, Abbé, i. 238
Chattanooga, ii. 80
Chester-le-Street, i. 6
Childers, Right Hon. H. C. E., i. 340, 450; ii. 105, 176, 190, 227, 420
China, ii. 157
Choate, Joseph, President Union League Club, ii. 90
Chouts, Mr., American orator, ii. 89
Christian, Prince, ii. 116
Christian Socialist, the, i. 280
Christick, M., Servian Minister, ii. 125
Church, the Irish, i. 177; ii. 181–184
Churchill, Lord Randolph, ii. 246, 294
Cima Tosa, the, ii. 479
Clare, Forster's visit to, ii. 390
Clayden, Mr., and the Birmingham League, i. 541
Clifden, famine at, i. 193
Clogher, collision with the police at, ii. 311
Closure, the, ii. 299
Club des Ateliers, i. 239
Club des Femmes, i. 237, 239
Cobden, Mr., i. 115, 338, 341, 356, 358, 362, 365; ii. 8
Coercion, ii. 239, 292, 370, 382, 420, 464
Coghlan, Dr., preacher, ii. 200
Cold-water cure, the, i. 160
Coleridge, Hartley, i. 100, 211
Collins, Mr., Prince Leopold's tutor, i. 515
Collyer, Rev. Robert, ii. 73
Colonies, the, ii. 90, 91, 97, 100, 503
Communism and Socialism, distinction between, i. 237
Compensation for Disturbance Bill, ii. 244, 246, 249
Confederate cruisers, i. 358
Congo river, ii. 117
Connaught, ii. 260, 269, 304, 336, 364, 415
Connemara, ii. 286
Constabulary, Royal Irish, ii. 278, 321, 324, 350, 450, 553
Constantinople, Forster at, i. 401; the Conference, ii. 162
Cook, Mr., the excursion agent, i. 351
Cooper Institute, New York, ii. 66, 69
Cooper, Thomas, the Chartist, i. 157, 167, 199, 245, 251, 525; ii. 215, 471
Cork, ii. 260, 262, 304, 337
Corn Laws, i. 156
Corti, Count, Italian Minister, ii. 136
Cosmopolitan Club, i. 346; ii. 37

"Cottage Ladies," the, i. 45-92, 125, 129
Cotton Ports, blockade of the, i. 354
Courtais, General, i. 241, 244
Cowen, Joseph, i. 307
Cowper, Lord, ii. 258, 351, 423, 467
Craven Moor, ii. 47
Cromer, i. 92, 145
Cropper, J., i. 477; ii. 538, 541
Cross, Mr. J. K., 432, 433
Cross, Sir Richard, ii. 175, 191
Crowe's "History of France," i. 65
Cumin, Mr., i. 477, 508
Cumulative Vote, the, i. 516, 527, 528, 566
Cybele, Temple of, i. 426

D

Daily News on Bulgarian atrocities, the, ii. 108, 126, 128, 132, 145
Dale, Mr., minister of the Independents, i. 527, 539
Dalkeith, Lord, contests Midlothian, ii. 230
Danube, Forster on the, i. 401
Davis, Bancroft, and the Alabama claims, ii. 26
Davis, Thomas, leader of the Young Ireland movement, i. 202
Davitt, Michael, ii. 300, 306, 337
De Grey, Lord. *See* Ripon.
Democratic party of New York, the old, ii. 70
Derby, Lord, i. 356, 392; ii. 146, 171, 179, 186, 188, 194, 198, 200
Derkee, Dr., and the Bandurra famine, i. 190
Derrynane, i. 177, 183
Dial, the, i. 147
Dickenson, Colonel, American senator, on the Canada question, ii. 85
Dilke, Sir Charles, on the Education Act, i. 542
Dillon, John, i. 202; intended prosecution, ii. 259; suspended, 300; the affair at Clogher, 311; arrested, 312–315; Parnell arrested, 358; three Irish members in prison, 387; Kilmainham treaty, 438; released, 453
Disestablishment, ii. 181–184
Disraeli, Benjamin. *See* Beaconsfield.
Disturbance Bill, Compensation for, ii. 244–250, 332
Dixon, Mr., i. 480, 488, 528, 533, 545; ii. 63
Dogs of Constantinople, the, i. 429
Doherty, Irish socialist, i. 237
Donegal, ii. 304
Donoughmore, Lord, ii. 389
Doonasheen, Patrick Egan murdered at, ii. 347
Dorsetshire, i. 24, 42
Dublin Board, the, ii. 508
Dublin, Parnellite demonstration at, ii. 340
Duchy of Lancaster, Mr. Bright Chancellor of the, i. 556
Dudley, Elizabeth, Quakeress, i. 41
Dufferin, Lord, ii. 66, 68
Duffy, Mr., with Carlyle in Ireland, i. 249
Durham, Forster at, i. 96
Dynamite policy, the, ii. 340

E

Earlham, i. 74, 77
Eary, murder of Patrick, ii. 347
Edinburgh Review, Forster a contributor to the, i. 286, 293
Education Act, the, i. 450–520, 541, 551, 556; ii. 5, 49, 58
Education, necessity for popular, i. 169, 259, 294, 301, 311, 348, 435
Education Union, the National, i. 465
Egan, Patrick, ii. 259, 437
Egypt, ii. 172, 178, 496–503
Elliot, Sir Henry, ii. 125, 128, 132, 168–172
Ellis, James, i. 224
Ely, Lady, i. 513; ii. 172, 529
Emerson, Ralph Waldo, i. 235, 237, 240, 242, 253; ii. 65
Emigration, i. 258; ii. 274, 422, 438, 558
Emis Effendi, i. 411
Emly, Lord, ii. 215
Endowed Schools Bill, i. 456
Ennis, Parnell's speech at, ii. 251
Epirus, ii. 141, 149, 199
Evarts and the Alabama claims, ii. 25

Evictions, ii. 244, 264, 321, 425, 553
Exarch of the Bulgarian Church, the, ii. 127
Exeter Hall, ii. 202
Explosive letter, the, ii. 328, 385
Eyre, Governor of Jamaica, i. 382–390, 399

F

Factory Acts, i. 446, 468
Famine in Ireland, i. 170–177, 189–200
Fawcett, Mr. Henry, i. 480, 502; ii. 171, 192, 197
Femmes, Club des, i. 237
Fenians, ii. 296, 417
Feudalism, i. 367
Field, Mr. Cyrus, ii. 69
Fish, Mr., ii. 24, 30, 88
Fisherman's Friend, the, i. 49
Fishponds House, i. 50–54
Fison, Mr., i. 137, 138; ii. 318
Fitzgerald, Rev. —, and the distress at Clifden, i. 194
Fitzmaurice, Edmund, i. 530; ii. 170
Fitzwilliam, Lord, i. 59
Flogging in the Army abolished, ii. 222
Forster, Right Hon. William Edward, born, i. 29; at school at Fishponds House, 50; Mr. Binns's school at Tottenham, 55; attends an Anti-slavery meeting, 59; his passion for mathematics, 60; wishes to go to the bar, 68; reads with private tutor, 69; his school themes foreshadow his after-work, 70; visit to the House of Commons, 71; in business, 76; teaches in a Sunday school, 90; meetings of Friends, 91; Norwich election, 93; leaves Robberds, 94; Darlington, 95; Pease's woollen mill, 97; leaves Darlington, 129; bachelor life, 133; moves to Hampstead, 134; in business at Bradford, 137; walking tour in Scotland, 143; his physical energy, 144; business prosperity, 156; visits Ireland during the famine, 171–184; again in Ireland, 188; depression of trade, 199; removes to Rawdon, 204; Thomas Carlyle, 205–214, 227, 244, 249, 268; carriage accident, 214; Chartism, 218–227; Paris, 227–245; Ireland, 249; Paris again, 251; cholera at Bradford, 251; marries Jane Arnold, 263; separates from the Society of Friends, 265; removes to Burley, 270; hates all field sports, 283; chairman of the Board of Guardians, 285; death of his father and mother, 296–300; addresses the electors of Leeds, 310; captain of volunteers, 320; musketry course at Hythe, 323; elected for Bradford, 330; house in Guilford Street, 332; maiden speech, 332; visits Lord Houghton at Fryston, 342; house in Montagu Street, 346; the Great Exhibition, 351; illness, 353; house in Eccleston Square, 362; defends Stansfeld, 364; the Tyrol, 371; choleraic attack, 371; speech at Bradford, 378; Under-Secretary for the Colonies, 380–392; reform, 393–400; visit to the East, 401–434; Minister of Education and Privy Councillor, 450; author of the Education Act, 470; its second reading, 490; in the Cabinet, 505; in attendance at Balmoral, 511; hostile constituents, 519; the *Beehive*, 524; enemies, 536; friends, 544; at Osborne, 549; Bright's criticisms, 558; resignation of Mr. Gladstone, 574; in trouble with the Upper House, ii. 4; the Geneva arbitration, 8–33; club life, 37; resignation of the Ministry, 57; Playfair's motion, 61; Sheffield board school, 63; visits America, 65: Quebec, 66; Montreal, 67; Ottawa, 68; New York, 69; Chicago and Springfield, 72; Colorado, 77; his father's grave, 81; the Normal Black School, 85; the American Senate, 88; Union League Club, 90; returns to England, 92; "Our Colonial Empire," 100; elected Lord Rector of Aberdeen University, 103; visits the East, 111; his passion

for sight-seeing, 111; and for genealogies and pedigrees, 112; travelling acquaintances, 114; Moscow horse-show, 115; dines with the King of the Belgians, 116; Prague and Cracow, 117; Bucharest, 119; storm on the Danube, 121; Constantinople, 126; Said Pacha, 133; returns to England, 142; speech on the Eastern Question, 145; address at Aberdeen as Lord Rector, 153–160; freedom of the city, 161; meets Ignatieff at Hatfield, 166; Germany and Bohemia, 177; Bristol, 178; Eastern Question, 179–203; serious carriage accident at Pau, 205; Bradford Liberal Association, 210; the "fighting Quaker," 225; hard work, 229; Chief Secretary for Ireland, 233; O'Connor Power's Bill, 242; his outburst against the Upper House, 248; murder of Lord Mountmorres, 253; Captain Boycott, 265; reinforcement of troops in Ireland, 273; hideous crimes, 277; Parnell, 289; the Irish Party, 290; condition of Ireland, 294; "Buckshot," 301; Protection Act, 308; imprisonment of the suspects, 316; his friends anxious about his personal safety, 317; wishes to resign, 324; denounced by O'Donovan Rossa, 327; the explosive letter, 328, 385; Land Act, 333; Tyrone election, 336; arrest of Parnell, 357; declares the Land League illegal, 359; unfriendly criticisms, 372; visits the Queen at Osborne, 381; efforts to alienate him from his own party, 383; committee to inquire into the working of the Land Act, 390; journey to Clare, 393; his speech at Tullamore, 397; escapes assassination, 430; the Kilmainham treaty, 436–440; resigns, 443; his capacity for work, 448; the Phœnix Park murders, 458; offers to go back to Ireland, 462; trip to Normandy, 471; whist, 472; visits Russia, 474; Alpine climbing, 476–480; President of the Gladstone Club, Glasgow, 483; freedom of the city of Glasgow, 484; at the Leeds Liberal Club, 487; Parnell and the outrages, 488; South Africa, 489–494; visits the Balkan Provinces, 494; Household Suffrage Bill, 495; the Soudan, 496; his declaration regarding Mr Gladstone, 500; Colonial Federation, 504; fall of Mr. Gladstone's Government, 507; Manchester Ship Canal Bill, 509, 512, 522; his speech at Bradford, 515; merits as a speaker, 517; Baden, 524; illness, 527; Sir William Jenner and Dr. Fox, 534; the Bradford Liberal Association adopt him as their candidate, 536; elected for Central Bradford, 540; picture in the Reform Club, 557; death, 562

Forster, William, father of the Right Hon. W. E. Forster, i. 8–15; marries Anne Buxton, 24; Bradpole, 24; first visit to America, 33; removes to Earlham Road, 77; his indecision, 86; second visit to America, 163; Ireland, 171; his strong points, 254; last visit to America, 295; death, 296

Forsters of Tottenham, the, i. 297–299

Fortescue, Chichester, i. 374

Fortescue, Lord, ii. 191

Fotterel, Mr., solicitor to the Land Commission, ii. 386

Fox, Dr., i. 515; ii. 527, 534

Fox, Mrs. Charles, i. 78, 206–212, 497; ii. 214, 380

Fox, Robert Barclay, i. 78; letters from Forster, 87, 147, 159, 205, 212, 296; extract from his diary, 152; death, 300

Fox Ghyll, ii. 63

Fox How, i. 344; ii. 64

France, threatened war with, i. 320

Fremont, Colonel, i. 304, 334

Friends, the Society of, i. 5–23, 58, 85, 91, 170, 182, 195, 265, 290, 301; ii. 551

Friendsville, i. 296; ii. 72

Fry, Elizabeth, i. 14, 17, 23, 28, 41; Gurney, 52

Fryston, i. 205, 342

G

Gallenga, Signor, the *Times* correspondent, ii. 126, 130
Galt, Sir A., and Manitoba emigration, ii. 274
Galway, i. 182; ii. 258, 337, 390
Garrisons, U.S.A., the station-master at, ii. 69
Gastrell, Mr., consul at Bucharest, ii. 119
Gaunt, Mr., farmer at Bolton, i. 142
Geneva arbitration, the, ii. 20–23
Gladstone Club, Forster President of the Glasgow, ii. 483
Gladstone, Herbert, ii. 228, 229
Gladstone, Right Hon. W. E., Chancellor of the Exchequer, i. 365; his speeches, 366; death of Cobden, 368; reform, 391–401; forms his first Cabinet, 449; Education Bill, 499–505, 539–549; resigns, 550; resumes office, Disraeli being unwilling to form a Ministry, 551; letter from Forster, 568; resigns, February, 1874, 574; the Alabama claims, ii. 23–34; retires from public affairs, 93; his indictment of Turkish misrule, September, 1876, 110, 144; the Eastern Question, 162–176, 195; letter from Forster about the caucus, 212; his double return for Leeds and Midlothian, 230; forms his second Cabinet, Lord Beaconsfield having resigned, 232; the Disturbance Bill, 246; correspondence with Forster on Irish affairs, 260–265, 267–272, 284–287, 320, 335, 344–352, 358–369, 377, 388–392, 406–428, 434, 544; Guildhall speech, 266; Irish obstruction, 300; denounced by O'Donovan Rossa, 326; loyally supports Forster, 331; denounces Parnell and the Land Leaguers at Leeds, 351; announces the arrest of Parnell, 355; the "new departure," 431, 444; Kilmainham treaty, 436–440; resignation of Forster, 443; Home Rule policy, 543, 553.
Glenelg, Lord, i. 109
Glyn, Mr., i. 473; ii. 32
Goderich, Lord, i. 309
Godwin, Mr., ii. 52
Goethe, i. 162
Goldney, Sir G., and the South African Bill, ii. 176
Gordon, General, i. 357; ii. 496–503
Gortschakoff, General, ii. 195
Goschen, Mr. G. J., ii. 59, 172, 175
Grant, President, ii. 29, 72, 89
Granville, Lord, ii. 23, 31, 59, 96, 105, 165, 192, 230, 390
Greece, i. 159, 403, 433; ii. 141
Gregory, Mr., M.P. for Galway, pleads the cause of the Confederacy, i. 334, 336, 347
Grellet, Stephen, i. 14, 16, 23, 54
Grey, Sir George, i. 352, 502
Grillion's Club, ii. 37, 166, 191
Grove House, Forster at school at, i. 55
Guercino, ii. 128
Guizot, parodies and caricatures of, i. 229
Gurney, Anna, i. 47, 85; John, 69, 74; Russell, 383
Gurneys of Norwich, the, i. 16, 22, 28

H

Habeas Corpus Act, suspension of the, discussed by Forster and Gladstone, ii. 257–261, 264, 268, 285; urged by an Irish magistrate, 281; the Protection Act, 295
Halifax, Lord, i. 533, 548; ii. 32
Hall, Rev. Newman, i. 539, 541
Hall, Robert, Conservative member for Leeds, i. 309
Harcourt, Sir William G. G. V., ii. 32, 104, 106, 165, 177, 222, 458, 464
Hardaker, Mr., working-man candidate for Bradford, ii. 52
Hargreaves, William, ii. 539
Harrison, Mr., Deputy-Clerk of Council, i. 515
Hartington, Lord, ii. 93–97, 104, 106, 163, 174, 176, 188, 190–201, 222, 230, 246, 261, 500

Hartland, Alfred, schoolfellow of Forster's, i. 52
Hay, Sir John, condemns coercion, ii. 409, 432
Hayden, Professor, Head of U.S. Survey Department, ii. 78
Hayward, Mr., ii. 2
Healy, Mr. T. M., ii. 431
Heaton, Rev. W., of Leeds, i. 401
Helps, Sir Arthur, correspondence between Forster and, i. 510, 542; ii. 7; at Balmoral, 38
Henning, Edmund, i. 19, 40
Herbert, murder of Mr., ii. 414
Heron, M.P., Mr., with Forster in the East, ii. 119, 122
Herzegovina, ii. 129, 199
Hewitt, Abraham, New York Democrat, ii. 71
Hill, Lord George, i. 250
Hodgkins, Dr., i. 131
Hodgson, W. D. Arnold marries Miss F. A., i. 316
Hole, Mr., of Leeds, i. 260
Home Rule, ii. 53, 107, 242, 330, 487, 543, 553
Hook, Dr., vicar of Leeds, i. 294, 437, 495
Horsfall, John, of Bradford, i. 146, 152, 156
Houghton, Lord, i. 205, 233, 244, 332, 342, 523; ii. 524
Household Suffrage Bill, the, i. 400; ii. 487, 495
"How to become Owner of your Farm," ii. 386
Huddersfield, i. 308
Hughes, Thomas, i. 282, 321
Huntington, Lord, ii. 3
Hutton, R. H., i. 344, 477; ii. 147
Hyde Park, mob in, i. 392
Hythe, Forster at the School of Musketry, i. 323

I

Ignatieff, General, ii. 131, 137, 140, 166
Illingworth, Alfred, i. 505; ii. 53, 208, 227
Imperial Federation, ii. 503, 507, 521, 526
Imperial Titles Bill, ii. 106
Imperialism, ii. 99
India, i. 267, 279; ii. 156, 217
Indian Mutiny compared with Bulgarian atrocities, ii. 135
International Exhibition, Forster's employés at the, i. 350
Intimidation, ii, 344, 400
Inverness, Forster at, i. 143
"Invincibles," the, ii. 416, 430, 466
Ireland, i. 169–177, 189–200, 259, 367, 370, 474–478; ii. 233, 235, 294
Irish Church, the, i. 177
Irish Constabulary, Royal, ii. 278, 321, 324, 350, 450, 553
Irish in New York, the, ii. 71
Irish Land Bill, i. 478, 493, 564; ii. 303
Irish landlords, ii. 237, 245, 258, 261, 280, 286, 293
Irish members, suspension of the, ii. 300
Irish Militia, ii. 281
Irish obstruction, ii. 176
Irish University Bill, i. 550
Isandhlwana, ii, 220

J

Jackson, Canon, i. 293, 436, 440
Jamaica, i. 382–390
James, Sir Henry, ii. 104, 106, 165
Jenkins, Mr., and the Education Act, i. 472, 493, 548
Jenner, Sir William, ii. 534, 556
Jephson, Mr., Forster's private secretary, ii. 327, 395, 429, 448
Jerrold, Douglas, i. 199
Jewsbury, Miss, with Forster in Paris, i. 227
Jingoism, ii. 162
John Bull's burdens, i. 150
Johnson, Reverdy, ii. 10, 17, 19
Johnstone, Andrew, i. 103, 109, 553
Johnstone's nurses, Miss, ii. 123
Jones, Lloyd, i. 280, 524
Judd, Mr., ii. 74, 77
Juries, ii. 417

K

Kaffir war, Forster's article on the, i. 287, 293
Kansas question, the, i. 305
Kay-Shuttleworth, Sir James, on education, i. 439, 494
"Keckling" a candidate, ii. 50
Kelly, the murderer, ii. 467
Kennedy, Captain, i. 176, 184
Kensyle, famine at, i. 193
Kerry, ii. 260, 262, 304, 337, 417
Kerry, the Knight of, i. 174
Kidd, Rev. Richard, Forster's private tutor, i. 69
Killick, Mr., Forster's election agent, ii. 45, 53, 532, 535
Kilmainham Prison, ii. 310, 315, 356, 365, 369, 373
Kilmainham treaty, the, ii. 436–440, 457
Kingsley, Rev. Canon, i. 305; letter from Forster to, 490
Kinnaird, Mr., and the Irish famine, i. 186
Knight of Kerry, the, i. 174
Knoxville, i. 296; ii. 80
Kossuth, the Hungarian patriot, i. 319
Kula, Greek village, i. 422
Kuneh, Turkish village, i. 416
Kutaya, i. 414

L

Labour, decreased demand for, i. 150
Lacordaire, Père, i. 235
Lamartine, i. 236, 243
Lancashire operatives, distress of the, i. 354
Land Act, the, ii. 243, 303, 330–339, 388, 390
Land Commission, ii. 387
Land Courts, the, ii. 358, 364, 387
Land League, the, ii. 254–273, 288–294, 311, 323, 338–344, 352–362, 386, 415, 419
Landlords, Irish, i. 183, 184, 192, 195, 370; ii. 237, 245, 258, 261, 280 286, 293
Lansdown, Lord, ii. 417
Lavington, Cobden buried at, i. 368
Law, Mr., ii. 54, 272, 286
Lawrence, Lord, chairman of the first school board, i. 517
Layard, Austen Henry, i. 344, 369, 450; ii. 191, 195, 224, 232
Leader, the, i. 285
Lean, Joel, schoolmaster, i. 50
Leary, Patrick, murder of, ii. 366
Leeds, i. 308: Gladstone at, ii. 349, 352
Lees, Rev. —, of Kensyle, i. 193
Lemaître, Frederick, French actor, i. 236
Lenane, famine at, i. 191
Library at Wharfeside, Forster's, i. 270, 274
Limerick, i. 176; ii. 280, 320, 337, 390, 417
Lincoln, President, i. 369; ii. 72–77
Lindsay, Mr., with Forster in the East, ii. 120, 125
Lister, Samuel, at Bradford election, ii. 53
Lloyd, Clifford, ii. 380, 391
Lochnagar, i. 513, 515
Loffield, Dr., dispensary surgeon, i. 193
Long, Mr., in Constantinople, ii. 127, 130, 131
Longford, ii. 417
Loring, Mr., Forster's private secretary, ii. 511, 523, 543
Loughrea, ii. 337, 407
Low, Samuel, of Tenessee, ii. 80–84
Lowe, Robert, i. 349, 385, 396, 441, 465, 474, 533, 554; ii. 63, 217, 227
Lowestoft, i. 91
Lowther, James, ii. 176, 251
Ludlow, J. M., his sketch of Forster, i. 279; letter from Forster to, 309
Lumley, Sir J. Savile, Minister at Brussels, ii. 116
Lyons, Lord, ii. 200
Lythall, Mr., of Bradford, i. 146
Lytton, Forster condemns Lord, ii. 217

M

Macaulay, Lord, his strictures on William Penn, i. 285
McCarthy, Justin, ii. 322
McCormack, Sir W., surgeon, with the wounded Turks, ii. 125
Macdonald, Sir John, Premier of Canada, ii. 274, 493
Macdowell, Forster meets General, ii. 75
Macgillicuddy, Mr., Irish landlord, i. 173, 174
Macgregor, Captain, of the London Scottish, i. 325
Mackay, John, ii. 84
Mackenzie, John, Deputy-Commissioner in Bechuanaland, ii. 492
Macleod, Memoirs of Dr. Norman, *extract*, ii. 38
MacMahon, murder of Thomas, ii. 366
Madagascar and the slave trade, ii. 105
Maguire, Mr., member for Cork, i. 370
Mahmoud Pacha, ii. 129, 224
Mahommed Daoud, ii. 166
Manchester, Forster's letter to the Duchess of, ii. 216
Manchester Ship Canal Bill, ii. 509, 522
Manhattan Club, the, ii. 72
Manhood suffrage, i. 217
Manioli, brigand chief, i. 419
Manitoba, emigration to, ii. 274
Mansfield, Colonel, consul at Bucharest, ii. 119
Maroney, murder of Michael, ii. 414
Marshall, James Garth, i. 437
Martial law, i. 388; ii. 344
Martin, Mr. Baron, hears the Bradford election petition, i. 452
Martineau, Harriet, i. 344, 385
Maryborough, Irish priest at, ii. 342
Mathematics, Forster's study of, i. 56, 60, 100
Maule, Mr., member of the Jamaica Commission of Inquiry, i. 383
Maurice, Forster's article on Professor, i. 281, 287
Maurice, Rev. Frederick Denison, i. 166, 167, 347
Mayo, ii. 258, 286, 425
Mazzini, i. 364
Meiningen, Prince, ii. 178
Methody meeting, Carlyle at a, i. 207
Miall, Edward, i. 329, 447, 451, 496, 505, 522, 539, 541, 554; ii. 45, 52
Midhat, ii. 166, 169
Midlothian campaign, the, ii. 230
Military in Ireland, ii. 378
Militia, the Irish, ii. 281
Mill Street, ii. 349
Mills, Arthur, ii. 102
Mills, Remington, candidate for Leeds, i. 310
Milner Fields, i. 152
Milnes, Monckton. *See* Lord Houghton.
Minehead, i. 267
"Miscellanies," Carlyle's, i. 150
Moloney, murder of Michael, ii. 367
Monaghan, ii. 337
Montague, Lord R., opposes Education Bill, i. 477
Montenegro, ii. 168, 170
Montreal, ii. 66
Moonlighting, ii. 254, 365
Morton, Mr., of New York, ii. 87
Moscow, ii. 115
Motley, J. L., i. 334; ii. 11, 15, 18
Mountmorres, murder of Lord, ii. 253
Muir, Colonel, ii. 120, 125, 134
Mundella, A. J., i. 502, 538
Munster, ii. 260, 269, 336, 365

N

National Education Union, i. 465
Negro voters, ii. 78
Newcastle, i. 96, 307
Newgate, i. 14, 23, 28
New Orleans, ii. 78
New York, ii. 68, 92
Nicholas, Grand Duke, ii. 195
Nicholl (Elizabeth Pease), Forster's letter to Mrs., i. 153
Niger expedition, the, i. 126
Nikita, ii. 123
Nile expedition, the, ii. 502
Nobility, the, i. 398
Noel, Baptist, i. 188

Northcote, Sir Stafford, i. 349, 505; ii. 21, 171, 176, 192, 205, 227, 388
Northrepps Hall, i. 47, 74, 92, 98, 145
Nubar Pasha, ii. 172
Nurse, Mountford, i. 92, 93

O

"Oakfield," a novel, i. 318
O'Brien, Mrs. Robert Vere, i. 273; ii. 111, 316, 328, 404, 414
O'Brien, Smith, i. 202, 230
Obstruction, Irish, ii. 176, 177, 300
O'Callaghan, Colonel, ii. 393
O'Connell, Charles, i. 178
O'Connell, Daniel, i. 156, 174, 178, 190, 202
O'Connell, Maurice, i. 179
O'Connor, T. P., ii. 240
Oddy, Joe, ii. 53
O'Hagan, Baron, ii. 359
O'Kelly, J, ii. 386, 452
Olympus, Mount, i. 404, 419
Opium traffic, i. 134
"Organisation de Travail," i. 226
Osborne, Forster's visits to, i. 549, 551; ii. 381
Osborne, Mr. i. 551, ii. 2
O'Shea, Captain, ii. 424, 434, 436
O'Sullivan, Mr., land agent, i. 176
Ottawa, ii. 68
"Over Population," i. 226
Overstrand, i. 47, 129
Owen, R.N., Captain, i. 134
Owen, Robert, the socialist, i. 157

P

Pages, Garnier, i. 243
Pakington, Sir John, i. 441, 477
Palmer, evictions on the estate of Sir Roger, i. 250
Palmerston, Lord, i. 113, 307, 332, 335, 368, 370; ii. 108
Panateroff, ii. 129
Papists in the American Senate, ii. 88
Paris, Forster in, i. 227–244, 251
Parnell, Charles Stewart, obstruction, ii. 176; agitation, 233; opposes the Disturbance Bill, 246; his speech at Ennis, 251; the Land League, 255; agrarian outrages, 257; *Freeman's Journal*, 264; boycotting, 276; attacked by Forster, 288; a bitter foe to Forster, 289–291; abortive trial in Dublin, 299; suspended, 300; Protection Act, 306; Land Act, 339; demonstration in Dublin, 340; Gladstone's speech at Leeds, 353; arrested, 355; imprisoned, 387; Kilmainham treaty, 434; released, 454; terrible moral responsibility, 488
Pau, ii. 205
Paulet, Mr. and Mrs., with Forster in Paris, i. 227
"Pauperism and its proposed Remedies," i. 256
Payn, James, describes Forster at whist, ii. 473
Peace Preservation Act, the, ii. 419
Peafield, i. 81
Peases, the, i. 98
Peel, General, i. 396
Peel, Sir Robert, i. 72, 156, 397; ii. 175, 191
Pender, Sir John, ii. 494
Penn, William, i. 285
Père Lacordaire, i. 235
Philadelphia, ii. 87
Philosophical Institution of Edinburgh, ii. 100
Philpot, Rev. W., his reminiscence of Forster, i. 145
Phœnix Park murders, the, ii. 457
Pickwick, i. 90
Pirie, Dr., of Aberdeen University, ii. 161
Playfair, Sir Lyon, ii. 59, 538
Plunket, Mr., i. 191
Poaching Bill, i. 353
Poland, manifestation for, i. 240, 241
Poll, Samuel, foreman to Mr. Robberds, i. 77
Pomaks, the, ii. 130
Pope, Forster meets General, ii. 75
Population, increase of, i. 149
Portarlington, ii. 396
Potato famine, i. 170–177, 189–200
Poverty and wealth, i. 149
Power, O'Connor, ii. 241

Priestman, John, i. 224, 329
Property, disproportion of, i. 149
Protection Act, the, ii. 297, 306, 326, 343, 382, 406, 418
Provincial Councils Bill, the, ii. 420
Pulszky, Professor, ii. 118, 153, 185, 197
Punch, cartoon in, ii. 127
Purchase, abolition of, i. 532, 569

Q

Quakerism, i. 211, 266, 286
Quebec, ii. 66
Queen, the, Forster's chivalrous devotion to, i. 511; letter of sympathy to Mrs. Forster from, ii. 565

R

Radnor, Lord, i. 199, 200
Ragged School Union and Lord Shaftesbury, i. 491
Raleigh, Dr., and the Birmingham League, i. 541
Rand, John, Bradford manufacturer, i. 156
Rathkeale, i. 176; ii. 280
Rawdon, i. 204, 269
Redmond, Mr. W. A., ii. 431
Reform Bill, the, i. 379, 392
"Reign of Terror," ii. 296
Relief of Distress Bill, the, ii. 243
Religious difficulties in the Education Bills, i. 468, 488, 492, 496, 503
Rhind, Mr., cures Forster's choleraic attack, i. 371
Richard, Henry, i. 502, 504, 539, 541; ii. 58
"Right to Work," Forster's letters on the, i. 285
Ripley, Henry William, ii. 52, 55
Ripley, Sir Henry, i. 447, 452
Ripon, Lord, i. 342–346, 381, 390, 450, 455, 472, 477, 497, 500, 515, 523, 529, 548, 552; ii. 7, 21–25, 329
Ristich, ii. 121, 122
Robberds, Mr., i. 76, 90, 93
Robertshaw, Walter, ii. 53
Robinson, Canon, of Bolton Abbey, i. 294
Robinson, Ensign, at Hythe with Forster, i. 325
Rochejaquelin, de la, i. 236
Rodgers, Dr. James, ii. 86
Rorke's Drift, ii. 220
Ross of Bladensburg, Captain, ii. 393
Rossa, O'Donovan, ii. 326
Rothschild and the Irish famine, i. 186
Rowland, Mary, old family servant, ii. 302
Rowles, one of the "Invincibles," ii. 468
Royal Irish Constabulary, ii. 278, 321, 324, 351, 450
Russell, Lord Charles, i. 352
Russell, Lord John, i. 186, 204, 332, 335, 338, 374–380, 390, 400, 455; ii. 2, 17, 29
Russell, Lord Odo, ii. 177
Russell, William, schoolmaster, ii. 83
Russia, ii. 109–140, 162, 169, 189, 199
Rustchuk, i. 402

S

Said Pacha, ii. 132, 166
St. Louis, Forster at, ii. 78
Salford Barracks explosion, ii. 341
Salikly, Forster at, i. 424
Salisbury, Lord, ii. 79, 163, 166, 186, 188, 202, 223, 275, 507
Salt, Sir Titus, i. 224, 328; ii. 54
Sandford, Sir Francis, i. 477, 508, 542
Sandon, Lord, Vice-President of the Council of Education, i. 574; ii. 58
"Sartor Resartus," i. 150
Savings bank at Burley, i. 278
Saxe, the Princess of, ii. 116
Schenck, General, ii. 18, 26, 28, 30, 32, 74
Schmöcks, in Hungary, ii. 117
School boards, election of, i. 507, 515
School statistics, i. 520
Schools Inquiry Commission, i. 365, 370, 443
Schouvaloff, Count, Russian Ambassador, ii. 192, 200

Schuyler, ii. 130
Scio, Forster at, i. 432
Scotland, the elder Forster's visit to, i. 16; Forster's walking tour in, 143
Scots Greys in Ireland, the, ii. 393
Scott, General, i. 344
Scott Holland, Canon, ii. 555
Seebohm, Benjamin, i. 152
Selim Bey, i. 423
Semendria, ii. 124
Servia, ii. 118
Seward, Mr., i. 344, 369; ii. 20
Sexton, Mr., ii. 259, 343, 358, 373, 409
Seymour, Governor of British Columbia, i. 391
Shaftesbury, Lord, i. 491; ii. 531
Sheehy, Father, ii. 334, 339
Sheridan, Land Leaguer, ii. 437, 439
Sheridan, Mr. P. J., ii. 259
Sherman, General, ii. 73, 75
Shorncliffe camp, i. 326
Shuttleworth, Sir James Kay, i. 294
Sidmouth, i. 128
Simon, John, and vivisection, ii. 7, 45, 57
Slave circular, the Admiralty, ii. 103
Slave trade Blue books, ii. 105
Slavery, i. 14, 21, 36, 58, 98, 103–115, 169, 288–295, 305, 338, 348, 357; ii. 58, 89, 482
Sligo, Lord, i. 191
Smith, Professor Goldwin, i. 367, 387; ii. 100
Smith, W. H., ii. 58, 176
Smyrna, i. 428
Smyth, Mr., of the Ottoman Bank, ii. 133
Smyth, P. J., his speech on Home Rule, ii. 107
Smythe, murder of Mrs. H. J., ii. 411
Soudan, the, ii. 496–503
South Africa, ii. 97, 176; war, 220; Bechuanaland, 489
South Kensington Department, ii. 35
Special constables, i. 224, 247; not practicable in Ireland, ii. 350, 360
Special magistrates in Ireland, ii. 380, 396, 405, 423
Spectator, the, ii. 147
Spencer, Lord, ii. 258, 338, 423, 431
"Spencer's Social Status," i. 287
Springfield, U.S.A., Forster at, ii. 74
Stansfeld, James, M.P. for Halifax, his motion in favour of economy, i. 349, 364, 532; ii. 44, 105, 538
Steele, Sir Thomas, ii. 324, 349, 354
Stephen Aga, Armenian merchant, i. 411
Stephen, Sir G., and the Anti-slavery Society, i. 131
Stephens, Mr., Vice-President of the Confederation, ii. 89
Sterling, John, i. 158, 151, 166
Storks, Sir Henry, on the Jamaica Committee of Inquiry, i. 383
Stowe, Mrs. Beecher, i. 288
Strangford, Lady, ii. 108, 131
Stratford de Redcliffe, Lord, ii. 150
Strawberry Hill, Forster at, ii. 2
"Strikes and Locks-out," i. 293
Sturge, Thomas, i. 41, 110
Suffield, Lord, chairman at Anti-slavery meeting i., 59
Sullivan, Right Hon. Edward, ii. 359
Sullivan, T. D., ii. 259
Sultan, the, i. 403; ii. 126, 129
Sumner, i. 358, 360; ii. 11–20, 22, 65
Sunday Closing Bill, ii. 202
Syra, i. 432

T

Tammany Society, the, ii. 70
Tarbert, Forster at, i. 178
Tatar-Bazardjik atrocities, the, ii. 109, 144
Taylor, John, ii. 52
Taylor, Thomas, curate of Bradpole, i. 41, 50
Tchernaieff, ii. 123, 168
Temple, Cowper, i, 502
Temple, Dr., i. 372, 378
Tenterden, ii. 23, 31
Terglou in Cariola, Forster climbs the, ii. 479
Theobald, Samuel, draper and Quaker, i. 132
Therapia, ii. 130
Thessaly, ii. 141, 149, 199
Thetford, i. 137
Thomas, Sir George, ii. 133

Thornton, Mr., Minister at Washington, ii. 24, 274
Threatening letters, ii. 327, 367
Tintern Abbey, a schoolboy's walk to, i. 54
Tipperary, ii. 393
Toole, Owen, of Innisturk, i. 190
Toronto, Roman Catholic Archbishop of, ii. 422
Tottenham, i. 6, 55–73, 297
Townsend, Meredith, i. 318, 344
Townend, Simeon, ii. 53
Trade Unionism, i. 282
Trotter, Captain, of the Niger expedition, i. 127
Tufton, Sir Henry, ii. 226, 228
Tuke, James, i. 196; ii. 274, 301, 422, 447, 551, 558
Tulla, ii. 395, 401
Tullamore, Forster's speech at, ii. 397–403
Turkey, i. 403; ii. 108–140, 162, 170, 189, 199, 223
Turkomans, the, i. 417
Turturhar, i. 409
Tylor, Mr. L., his recollections of Forster, ii. 47
Tyrone, ii. 335, 337

U

Ulster, ii. 264, 336
"Uncle Tom's Cabin" i. 288–291
Union League Club, New York, ii. 87, 90
United States. *See* America.
Ushaw, Catholic College of, i. 96

V

Vaccination Law Amendment Bill, ii. 6, 202
Valuation, Government, ii. 286
Vancouver's Island, i. 391; ii. 26
Varna, i. 402
Venning, John, i. 80
Victoria University, ii. 179
Vivisection, i. 84, 284; ii. 1, 7, 8, 107
Volunteer movement, the, i. 320

W.

Wade, ii. 45, 53
Wakefield, Edward, i. 189
Waldegrave, Lady, ii. 200
Walpole, Mr., i. 349
Walsh, J. W., ii. 259
Walsham, North, i. 92
Ward, of the *Weekly Chronicle*, i. 235, 242, 244
Warner, Yardley, ii. 80, 84
Warren, Sir Charles, in Bechuanaland, ii. 493
Washburn, Dr., ii. 223, 231
Waterford, ii. 394
Waterhouse, Mary, i. 163
Waterville, i. 177
Webster, Dr., ii. 161
Webster, Mr., ii. 89
Wellington, Duke of, i. 43, 45
Welsh, Father, i. 183
Welsh, Mr., of the Irish police, i. 190
West, Mr., ii. 31, 416
Westmeath, murder of Mrs. Smythe in, ii. 411
Westminster Abbey, funeral service in, ii. 566
Westminster Review, the, i. 281–293
Westport, i. 184, 189
Weyland, Dr., Roman Catholic Bishop of Bombay, i. 179
Weymouth, i. 20, 40
Whalley, Mr., i. 477
Wharfedale, i. 39, 276
Wharfeside, i. 270
Whitaker, Mr., of the *Levant Herald*, ii. 131
Whitbread, i. 502; ii. 104
White, Consul, ii. 120
White, Lord S., ii. 167
Wickham, Mr., i. 331
Wickstead, Mr., i. 437
Wilson, Vice-President, ii. 73
Winterbotham, Mr., i. 528, 551
Wood, Mr. Bradford, American Minister at Copenhagen, i. 340
Workshops, Louis Blanc's, i. 230, 257

Wounded, aid to the, ii. 125
Wrede, Prince, ii. 121

Y

Yarmouth, i. 92
Yarnall, Ellis, i. 301, 304, 333, 384; ii. 88
Yarrow, Forster's colley, i, 275
Yorkshire, ii. 47, 49
Young Ireland, i. 202

Z

Zanzibar and the slave trade, ii. 105
Zichy, Count, Austrian Ambassador, ii. 136

THE END.

PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED, LONDON AND BECCLES.

00024281

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 05 October, 2018